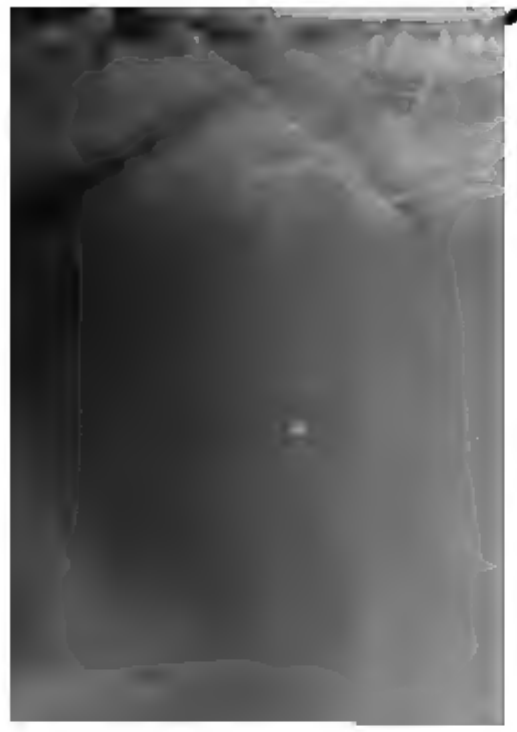

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

THIRD SERIES:

COMMENCING WITH THE ACCESSION OF

WILLIAM IV.

48° VICTORIÆ, 1884-5.

VOL. CCXCV.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE FOURTH DAY OF MARCH, 1885,

TO

THE NINETEENTH DAY OF MARCH, 1885.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1884-5.

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1885.

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VOLUME CCXCV.

THIRD SERIES.

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Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

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HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

SIXTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,

APPOINTED TO MEET 29 APRIL, 1880, IN THE FORTY-THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1884-5.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 4th March, 1885.

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PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS REDISTRIBUTION (*re-committed*) BILL.

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

[BILL 49.] COMMITTEE.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE. [THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [3rd March], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (for Committee on the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill.

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed*.

MR. WARTON said, he regarded the discussion up to that moment as little more than an explanation of the hon. Member for Liskeard's (Mr. Courtney's) retirement from the Government and his proportional representation scheme. He thought the House would agree with him that the course of their proceedings in reference to the Bill had been somewhat unsatisfactory. On the day fixed for the second reading they had no opportunity for a full debate on the principle of the measure; but it was stated by at least one Minister that, in consideration of the debate being then somewhat hurried or slurred over, the discussion on the principle of the Bill would be taken on the Motion for going into Committee. Altogether the course

of proceeding with respect to the Bill had been singularly unfortunate. The hon. Member for the Haddington Burghs (Mr. Craig-Sellar) gave Notice prior to the second reading of his intention to move his Scottish Amendment. The Speaker ruled that the hon. Gentleman was not entitled to give Notice at that time of such an Amendment; but somehow or other the hon. Gentleman secured the object he had in view and got the start of those who waited until the Bill had been read a second time before they handed in their Amendments. It was a regrettable circumstance that, instead of having an important debate on the Bill in the first instance, the question was narrowed by the hon. Member for Haddington's Amendment. He was sorry there had been a division on that Amendment, for it was clear that not many Members of that House would wish, after the bargain entered into by the two great Parties in the State, to support any Amendment, good or bad, with the object of defeating the Bill. The ridiculous figure which the advocates of proportional representation cut in the division showed the real feeling and temper of the House. Amendments might be supported by small numbers of devotees and fanatics; but the good sense of both sides of the House was determined to carry out fairly and fully the bargain come to by the two great Parties in the State. No one ought to violate that understanding and that compact. He earnestly hoped that there was something in the character of the English nation that made us better than every other nation in the world; but if we escaped the results brought about in every other country where power had slipped from the hands of those who were fit to exercise it into the hands of those who were not, it would be a special dispensation of Providence. There was in the Bill the principle of democracy. That principle had always been one of counting noses, irrespective of position, wealth, or intelligence. Even the Prime Minister, a short time ago, did not venture to go further than this, that the measure was mainly based on the principle of population. Instead, however, of being mainly based on that principle, it seemed to him to be wholly based upon it, and he would have preferred to have seen in it a more distinct recognition of the principle of property. No doubt, as far as Scotland was concerned, the principle adopted by the Government carried justice with it; but that was not the case with regard to England and Ireland. The population of Scotland had increased steadily since 1881, and he quite admitted that the country was entitled to an additional 12 Members. During the same period England had been going up and Ireland down. England had always returned a Conservative majority, Scotland a Liberal one, and Ireland now returned a majority of Liberals and Nationalists, and the Prime Minister, conscious of these facts, was seeking to increase the representation of Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, rather than give justice to the great population of England. If they took the Registrar-General's Returns and worked them out, they would find that, according to them, England was entitled to 505½ Members, Scotland to 72 Members, and Ireland to 92½ Members. Those figures showed the startling effect of the decrease of population in Ireland, and the increase in England, because in 1881 Ireland, according to the basis of population, was entitled to very nearly 100 Members. Wales had not been treated in the Bill as a nation. If it had been so dealt with it would have lost five Members. He observed, however, that in a Petition which was sent from the Principality to the Prime Minister, it was stated that if the Government reduced the number of Welsh Members it would be regarded as a national affront. Wales was, therefore, a nation for the purpose of keeping Members which it was not entitled to as such. It appeared that Swansea was to be extended 10 or 20 miles, so as to secure a population of over 100,000, which would entitle it to two Members; whereas Wigan, with a population of 57,000, was to have one of its Members cut off. Such was the notion of justice which the Government entertained. If the population of each of the Three Kingdoms remained stationary the injustice would not be so great; but when the rate of decrease in Ireland and of increase in England was so steady, any man deserving the name of a statesman would have taken notice of that tendency, and would not have drawn up a Bill which exaggerated the existing dispro-

portion. When Mr. Pitt made his arrangement at the time of the Union, the system of representation was not based upon population merely, because, if it were, Ireland would have been entitled to 215 or 220 Members. Mr. Pitt's principle was to take population and property, and strike a mean between the two. The population of Ireland was now about one-seventh of the aggregate population of the Three Kingdoms; its property was only one-fourteenth; and, by striking a mean between the two, Ireland would be entitled to something less than one-ninth of the number of Members of which the House was to be composed. But, instead of proceeding on the principle of population and property combined, Her Majesty's Government had taken the basis of population alone. That was the principle of democracy, and if the principle of democracy were to be carried out we should find that those who did not pay taxes would have the voting of the taxes, and would be able to say who should pay them. The Bill would give the Liberal Party a tremendous advantage in many parts of the country; and when a Party had an opportunity of obtaining a Party advantage like this, they should be honest enough to say so. He deplored very much that the Bill was based on the principle of population; but he was glad for the sake of public peace and public decency that an agreement had been come to between the Leaders of the two great Parties in the State, and that arrangement must be honestly carried out. It was, therefore, the duty of Members to support the Bill.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, he wished to take this opportunity of making a few observations upon the Bill. For many years as a Constitutional lawyer he had devoted a good deal of time and attention to our representative system, and he had always been in favour of the extension of the franchise. He supported the Bill for carrying household suffrage into the counties of the United Kingdom with the greater confidence because he believed it would be accompanied by a Redistribution Bill, based on the old lines of our Constitution, which every Conservative Member might feel not unwilling to support. But, having gone into the provisions of this Bill, he could not say that it was at all such as to answer the expectations entertained by the Party to which he had the honour to belong. The provisions of the Bill were based entirely on the numerical principle. He had long been taught to believe that the great beauty, harmony, and symmetry of the Constitution of this country arose from the different interests, qualifications, and parties represented in the country, and that in that way anything like the preponderance of a particular party or interest was avoided. He could not help saying that in this Bill Her Majesty's Ministers might have followed a different course from that which they had pursued. Household suffrage would have been a much safer principle of the Bill than population. It would have been a durable, substantial, and easily recognizable principle, which could be readily adapted to our wants. In 1858, having himself put forward a scheme of electoral suffrage, and supposing that the principle of the Reform Bill of 1832 had been based on population, he received a letter from Lord John Russell informing him that he was mistaken, and that the lines of the Bill proceeded on two principles—household suffrage and the payment of taxes. But in this Bill these principles had been totally ignored, and the population principle had been allowed to reign paramount. That was very different from the view of Pitt, Burke, Fox, and notably Mackintosh, who held that the safety, harmony, and symmetry of our Constitution depended on the combination of different principles. Mr. Pitt, on the 26th of May, 1797, said—

> "It is not the harsh uniformity of principles, each pushed to its extreme, but the general complexion arising out of the various shades, which forms the harmony of the representation and the practical excellence of the Constitution capable of improving itself consistently with its fundamental principles. Who will say that this beautiful variety may not have contributed to the advantage of the whole? That system was practical, and experience has confirmed the excellence of it; but the present plan goes the whole length of destroying all the existing representation, with the exception only of the county Members, and bringing all to one system. Are the Gentlemen who propose this system aware of the benefits resulting from a varied state of representation, and are they ready at once to resign them?"—(*Parl. Hist.* [33] 680.)

But this Bill entirely ignored what had hitherto been considered the excellence of our Constitution, and carried the numerical principle to an extent that had

never been thought of in the Reform Bills of 1797, 1832, and 1868; and he must express his great regret that the Bill had been prepared in the spirit in which it had been, leaving out the interests and influences of property. As to the First Schedule of the Bill, he thought that the number of boroughs doomed to decapitation, as he would term it, would have to undergo capital punishment without trial. But the number was considerably larger than the exigency of the times really required, as there had been no great demand in the country for this summary execution. Of the 79 boroughs which it was proposed to decapitate, many were totally undeserving of such punishment; they were not decaying, but were places of commercial prosperity. He was surprised to find that during the late Recess they were not in any way eager to assert their own claims. The Second Schedule contained a list of those boroughs that were to undergo partial disfranchisement; and in that list he was sorry to find many ancient and historic boroughs, some of them being the capitals of the counties, as Gloucester, Worcester, and Stafford, and also an ancient and important city in his own county — namely, Coventry. He would also point out that of the 32 boroughs contained in that list there were no less than 15 county towns possessing considerable weight and importance. That, he contended, was not at all required. He did not complain so much of the next Schedule, which proposed to give additional Members to the larger cities—for instance, Liverpool —though he considered the increase in their numbers excessive. One of the principal reasons for his objection to the Bill was that it transferred the electoral power from the Southern and Midland districts and the counties to the great manufacturing districts of the North, and, consequently, there would not be so large a representation of all those conflicting interests which the Constitution had hitherto provided for. Then there would be the great transfer to the Metropolis, to which, with its suburbs, there were actually no less than 61 Members apportioned, and he considered that was bestowing an inordinate degree of power on one district. It had been said that the overgrown power and influence of the capital of a country were often a danger to the State and to the safety of the people. That was notably so in the capital of France. He thought it was extremely unwise to deprive the City of London, which was the centre of the great commercial and mercantile interests of the Metropolis, of two seats in order to confer the right of representation upon such districts as Bethnal Green, St. George's-in-the-East, or the Strand. They had taken this Bill for granted and had put great confidence in the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Chelsea (Sir Charles W. Dilke); but, of course, the right hon. Gentleman's object was to make the representative system as democratic as possible. As to the portion of the Bill relating to Scotland and Ireland, he was glad to support it. He thought Scotland was highly deserving of the 12 additional Members proposed to be conferred upon her; but, at the same time, he strongly opposed the mode by which it was proposed to be effected—namely, by adding 12 to the already large numbers of the House; in fact, he should prefer, if possible, that the numbers of the House should be reduced to 600. With reference to Ireland, he congratulated the Government upon the wise policy which had influenced them in the matter, in not yielding to the cry of those who thought that numerical principles should be rigidly observed with regard to Ireland, but in looking to the real wants of that country. On the whole, he could only regret that the compromise by means of which this Bill had been produced had been of such a character as, he was sure, would endanger the interests of the Conservative Party. It had been wisely said by Burke that compromises might be good as Party tactics, but were always bad as statesmanship. It had been said that the last Bill of Mr. Disraeli was a leap in the dark; but he could not help thinking that the present Bill was a leap in the dark—a leap in the dark, over a precipice, so far as the Conservative Party were concerned.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he wished to make a few observations from a Scotch point of view. He could not help thinking the Scotch Members had reason to complain at being coerced into voting for an increase in the number of Members in the House. He did not like the increase; but from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles

W. Dilke), he understood that it was the only way in which Scotland would get their 12 additional Members. That was what they called in Scotland being "concussed" into voting. From what he gathered from the Leader of the Opposition also, they had no assurance that this part of the Bill would be maintained, or that, so far as the right hon. Gentleman was concerned, Scotland would get the additional number. He protested, however, against it being said that these 12 Members were given to Scotland. They were only what Scotland was absolutely entitled to according to her population, and they were not given to Scotland, but were proposed in order to give Ireland and Wales more than their proportion according to population. It might be, as had been said, that at one time Ireland had too few, and it was to be made up by giving her too many; but if that was to be done, they ought to be told by the Government that it was so. He protested against it being supposed that this Bill treated all parts of the country equally, as the claims of Ireland and Scotland had not been dealt with upon an equal footing. The same rule had not been applied to all parts—the same rule of disfranchisement had been, but not of enfranchisement. It was evident, if they compared Glamorganshire or Armagh with Lanarkshire. He supposed that Scotland must be content to get bare justice; but he did hope that Her Majesty's Government would honestly admit that they were doing more than justice to Ireland, and much more than justice to Wales, and that they were really giving these 12 additional Members to Ireland and Wales and not to Scotland.

Mr. HEALY said, that by the Forms of the House he was precluded from moving the Amendment of which he had given Notice. With regard to the alleged over-generosity of the Government to Ireland, he would say that the Irish Members did not regard it as anything of the kind. They considered that the Bill, as a whole, was a fair one, and was honestly intended by the Government. With regard to the proposed reduction in the number of Irish Members, surely the Government, after having depopulated their country for half-a-century, and refused it when it had 8,000,000 the 150 Members to which it was entitled, were not now going to cut down the number of Irish Representatives. Now, when the Irish Parliament had been destroyed, and the Irish Army had disappeared, were the Government going to take advantage of them? He must say the English generally did that sort of thing; but it appeared to him it was a thing they could hardly do now in the face of the public. The Irish were not particularly anxious to retain the 103 Members; they would be satisfied with 100, and would present two—the Members for Trinity College—with a blessing to the Scotch. If by means of the white fiend of jerrymandering they wanted those two flowers, they could put them as a bouquet in the button-hole of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell). They had heard from the Ulster Members—from the noble Lord the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton) and those who acted with him, and who had been vainly attempting to form an independent Party—that the Loyalists of Ireland were very much ill-treated by this Bill. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) had said that under this Bill the Whigs would be completely wiped out in Ireland. Well, that remained to be seen, and would depend a good deal upon the Nationalists. Wherever the Nationalists could not return a Member of their own colour they could hold the scales between the two Parties, and he could promise that the scales would be held with the utmost impartiality. The Loyalists of Ulster would get 20 Members—that was one-fifth of the representation—yet they were not a tenth of the population. Really he believed that the two Members for Trinity College and the four Members for Belfast represented them adequately enough. This was proved by what occurred in Ulster last year. Before the passing of the Franchise Act the conduct of the Loyalists was remarkable. They said that upon the soil of their Imperial and Loyal Province the foot of a single Nationalist should not enter. The Nationalists, to quote the expression of the noble Lord, must be prevented from "invading" Ulster, and if the Government did not prevent them the Loyalists would "take the law into their own hands" and prevent them. It used to be represented that the Parnellites were just like a travelling circus going to

Ulster once in a twelvemonth to tumble. But suddenly a change came over the spirit of their dream. After the passing of the Franchise Act, when the Parnellites had got Ulster in their hands, the case of these Gentlemen was that by this Bill the Government had entirely prevented them from getting an adequate representation. What were the facts? The Whig and Tory Party, as the Bill at present stood, would have about 23 seats. As the Bill originally stood they would have had about 18; but the Marquess of Salisbury's very significant letter of comfort to the Ulster Orangemen had been taken to heart by the Boundary Commissioners. The Marquess of Salisbury wrote a very notable letter when appealed to by the Orangemen to save them from destruction. He wrote—

"The protection of the Loyalist minority in Ireland depends upon the spirit in which the Boundary Commissioners carry out their instructions."

Consequently five seats, and perhaps six, which would under the original plans of division have gone to the National side, had been jerrymandered in the Conservative interest. Lord Spencer, as they believed in Ireland, issued secret instructions to the Boundary Commissioners that they would take the spirit, as it was called, of Lord Salisbury's hint into their consideration, and so where the original schemes were fair, Englishmen, if they took the trouble to look at the maps, which of course they would not, would see that the new schemes were absurd. He attacked the single-seat system because the single-seat system in Ireland had simply been turned into a machine for giving the Loyalists seats where they had no business to have them, and of preventing the Nationalists from having seats where they had the majority. In looking into the matter he found it necessary in Ulster to have regard to the religious opinions of the people, because the distinction between Protestants and Catholics was made by the Loyalists, who were constantly appealing to the people by the bloody shrouds of Aughrim and the Boyne and the fires of Smithfield to support the cause of Protestantism, and he forgot what other tags were generally added on to the peroration. The Boundary Commissioners had treated the question as one of Protestant v. Catholic or of Pope v. King William. Thus, in Ulster, the Commissioners made seven changes on the original schemes, one being made in Belfast; in the rest of Ireland only three changes were made—in Dublin, Mayo, and Kerry. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board said nine. Well, there were minor and unimportant changes as to names, but only three actual changes; and even supposing the right hon Baronet's figures to be correct, nine changes out of 23 was a very different proportion from seven changes out of nine. Was it not a very suspicious circumstance that out of the nine Ulster counties where the popular Party were satisfied with the existing plan changes were made in six of them? The popular Party would thereby lose seats in Armagh, Donegal, Tyrone, and Derry, and possibly also outside Ulster one seat in Dublin County and in Dublin City. Contrast the treatment Ulster Loyalists had received with the treatment the Nationalists had received. In the counties where the Catholics were in a majority shameful jerrymandering had gone on with the object of giving the Protestants seats to which they were not entitled, while in those parts in which the Protestants were in a majority things had been so managed that the Catholics would have no chance of returning a single Member. Take the county of Antrim, for instance. Out of a population of 200,000, roughly speaking, the Catholics numbered 60,000. Clearly they would be entitled to one seat, but they would not get it. The Catholics would not be able to return a single Member in Belfast, although they were entitled, according to population, to return one Member. So that, out of 400,000 in Antrim and Belfast, 100,000 Catholics would be mute and voiceless under this scheme. What had been done elsewhere? In Donegal the Catholics were in a huge and preponderating majority of five to one. The Protestant minority would, he admitted, be entitled to one seat; but it was given to them by jerrymandering, and if a seat was to be jerrymandered for the Protestants in Donegal, a seat should also be jerrymandered in Antrim and in Belfast for the Catholics. Take the case of Tyrone; the Catholics were in a preponderating majority, yet a Protestant could be returned. [Mr. MACARTNEY: No.] The hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Macartney) said "No," and shook his head;

but they would find the hon. Member was not so hopeless as he pretended, and that he would at the next Election call upon the electors to return him at the head of the poll. The case of Derry was a most notable and shameful case, and the most suspicious thing about it was that it was represented in this House by the Solicitor General for Ireland—a Member of Her Majesty's Government. Of course, his hon. and learned Friend would get up in this House and say he had nothing whatever to do with it, and so long as he (Mr. Healy) was in the House he would give him full credence; but when he passed beyond the door he would resume his liberty of appreciation, and would be, perhaps, inclined to say that the charges made in Derry were only explicable in one way. The Southern portion of Derry was a Catholic barony, and the Catholics were in a vast majority. The Solicitor General put his friends in motion. Very curiously, the original advertisements of the scheme for Derry were the last but one of those published. For weeks and weeks the public had been hungering to get a sight of the proposed boundary scheme for Derry; but the Commissioners took no heed, and made no signs in the matter. The boundary scheme was at length published, and it was found that the barony in the South had been joined on to two baronies in the North, the reason being that a mountain chain ran across the country, and that this was the natural division. The result of the division was that, out of 69,000 of the population, the Catholics numbered 27,000 in Derry. The Solicitor General instructed one of his friends, Dr. Todd, B.L., to appear before the Boundary Commissioners, and Dr. Todd announced that he appeared under the instructions of Her Majesty's Solicitor General for Ireland. Sudden panic and awe fell upon the Boundary Commissioners. Fancy this way of intimidating the Commissioners by saying that Her Majesty's Solicitor General entirely disapproved of the scheme! For a Gentleman like his hon. and learned Friend to instruct counsel to go down and intimate to his own Boundary Commissioners that he was entirely opposed to the scheme was wholly unjustifiable conduct. He would not have cared had the words used been mere harmless, empty words; but the Commissioners took them to heart, and made a change in the scheme that would prevent the Catholic party from returning a single Member. Whereas the Catholics were 37,000 to 67,000 of the population in the original scheme, by the amended one they would only be 34,000 to 70,000. That was a scandalous thing. In Central Armagh the same course had been pursued. In this case an error was undoubtedly originally made, and would have to be corrected in any case; but what was done? In Southern Armagh the National Party were in a vast majority; in Northern Armagh the Orange Party were in a vast majority; and as the county was to have three seats, it was as to Central Armagh that the struggle took place. The Commissioners accordingly threw into the Southern district, where they were not wanted, Catholics from the Central district, and took into the Central district the Orangemen from the Northern district, where they were not wanted. It was all very well to make complaints about the matter, but their complaints would fall on just as deaf ears as the complaints of the Loyal minority. An arrangement had been made by the two Front Benches, and, like the two blades of a pair of scissors, would cut everything coming between them. But, at the same time, it would be a most unfortunate thing in Parliamentary tactics if independent Members allowed these schemes to go by without a protest. The last case he would allude to in Ulster was the case of Down. In that case also there was a blot in the original scheme, for the Commissioners had forgotten to include the boundaries of Belfast. It was admitted that the Nationalists could carry Southern Down through with some difficulty. Now, under the scheme of the Commissioners, it was a dead certainty. Yet they claimed that the boundaries of Down had not been fairly managed, because in the Ards district Lower Ards was joined to the top of the county instead of to the Downpatrick division, and the reason given for this was that they declined to cross Strangford Lough. It was delightful to hear how the Government declined to cross Strangford Lough when one looked at the way they had jumped across Lough Swilly in Donegal. There was a division in Donegal called the Innishowen division separated by 40 miles

of sea from the Kilnachrennan division. The Conservative Party objected to the original scheme of the Commissioners, and for jerrymandering purposes their objections were heard, with the result that two portions of Donegal, which were as far asunder as a portion of Donegal was from Scotland, were united. They might just as well unite Kingstown and Holyhead for electoral purposes. Now he would come to the case of the county of Dublin, which was the strangest he had ever seen. At the Boundary Inquiry he was instructed by the popular Party to have the existing boundaries retained; but a well-known firm of Emergency Association solicitors in Ireland—Messrs. Dudgeon and Emerson—in the interests of the Conservatives of Rathmines, put forward a scheme which he was inclined to consider in the light of a good joke. What was his horror to find that the Commissioners had adopted the scheme *en bloc*. It was as good as a play. If they looked at the map they would find a little bit about the size of an inch marked red. That was one division, and all the rest of the county—100 miles—was the other division. If that was not jerrymandering Mr. Jeremiah Manders had lived in vain. It was remarkable that the Commissioners in their Report admitted that they had departed from their instructions, which were to have regard to the compactness of districts and the pursuits of the population, and they said they had followed the population where it was of the same character. Character was a very beautiful word if they only knew what it meant; but whether the people of one division were of better character than those in the other division he hardly thought the Commissioners were entitled to inquire. Take the City of Dublin. It had been similarly worked by these ingenious gentlemen, and they should contrast the way in which it had been treated compared with Belfast. Belfast, under the little arrangement made in Downing Street with the Prime Minister over walnuts and wine, was to have four Members by the adoption of the boundaries of the Exham Royal Commission of 1881. This Commission recommended that Belfast, Dublin, Drogheda, and other towns should have extended areas. The recommendation of this Commission was followed in the case of Belfast, and not followed in the case of Dublin and Drogheda, even though Drogheda was only 300 short of the 15,000 entitling it to a Member. If the recommendations of the Exham Commission were followed in the case of Dublin, it would be entitled to six Members; yet they would be satisfied with four Members if the boundaries were extended. He called the attention of the right hon. Baronet to the fact that by crossing a bridge a man could have a vote for his house in Dublin and another vote for his residence across the bridge. The township of Pembroke was included within the city boundary, although Rathmines, which was nearer Dublin, and the other townships were excluded. He regarded this as most unfair. These inconsistencies appeared to him to be the chief blots in the scheme as proposed for Ireland; and to show that his views were not the views simply of a mere politician, arguing for political purposes, he might quote the opinion of the Bishop of Athlone, who, though he had never before taken part in any political or contentious matter, felt constrained to write an indignant public letter protesting against the scheme adopted by the Commissioners. The Bishop, who described the scheme as appalling, wrote that, when he first read the paragraph in *The Derry Sentinel* setting forth the final decision of the Boundary Commissioners as to Donegal, he thought there must be some mistake. It was hard to believe that a number of gentlemen, placed in a position of great trust and delicacy, could make so light of their character for justice and fair play as to lend themselves to a piece of sharp practice, and he went on to say that their scheme was the Conservative scheme very much improved in the Conservative interest. The right hon. Gentleman had not treated the House fairly in this matter, for, in his opinion, Members were entitled to have before them for the purpose of the debate the original schemes put forward by the Commissioners, the same evidence, and the same view of the schemes proposed by each party, in order that they might see which political Party had been favoured or otherwise in the divisions adopted. But the right hon. Gentleman said—"If I do that for Ireland I must do it for England also." Well, and why not? The Queen's Printer could cope with the work, and the Public Exchequer was not

so deficient of funds that there was not sufficient money to enable a slight operation of this sort to be carried on. He hoped the Government would assure the House that his suggestion should be carried out. So far as jerrymandering had been possible in Ireland, it had been carried out, and he defied anyone by any scheme of proportional representation, or any other dodge, to jerrymander another seat for the Loyalists. Every trick and device that it had been possible to resort to had been indulged in. The cases of Ulster had been the result of arrangements between the Marquess of Salisbury, Earl Spencer, and the Boundary Commissioners. It would have been impossible for them to have arranged any more seats for the Loyalists, and he regarded the attack which the Ulster Party were making on the Government as a species of masked battery in order to hold the divisions already made in their favour. The case of Drogheda he thought was a very hard one. It was an old historic town, having its own Corporation and Sheriff, and it was in his opinion a great hardship that a town of that character should be deprived of its representation in Parliament because it was 200 or 300 short of the required number. Of course he would be asked where would he get the Member for Drogheda, to which he would at once answer, Trinity College. Trinity College by the Act of Union got one Member, and it got another by the Act of 1832. Now he, for one, could not understand why gentlemen who kept certain terms in Trinity College, and passed certain examinations which not one of them would be able to pass again six months after they they had got their degree, should be entitled to return to that House two Members of Parliament. It appeared to him that the whole scheme of University representation required to be looked after. To begin with, the polls he believed were kept open for more than one day. Then there was the system of proxy voting, and in addition he believed it was Masters of Arts, not Bachelors of Arts, who had the votes. Why Masters of Arts should have votes, and Bachelors of Arts should not, he confessed passed his comprehension. Moreover, if this was to be a learned franchise, and if persons of superior intelligence were to have votes, though they could not forget Sydney Smith's saying that he never knew a Senior Wrangler who was not a fool, if learning was, as it was said, to be represented, why then should not doctors and solicitors and barristers and engineers and other persons who took out degrees have votes in institutions of that character? For his part, he contended that University representation was altogether indefensible. But if there were two University seats in Ireland he did not see why one of the seats for Trinity College should not be merged in the Royal University. The Royal University of Ireland had more graduates than the London University, and if two University seats were to be given to Ireland he really did not see why the Royal University should not be merged in Trinity College for purposes of this sort. Finally, his advice to the "Loyal" minority would be to rest and be thankful. They had come very well out of this business. The Marquess of Salisbury's secret compact had been attended to. He said that it was evident the success of the Bill would depend on the spirit of the Boundary Commissioners, and no more favourable spirit for the Loyal minority could be distilled.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he thought that some of the observations made upon the Bill, before the speech of the hon. Member for Monaghan, showed that there were some hon. Members who had not made themselves acquainted with the details of the measure, or even the principles upon which it proceeded. The hon. Baronet the Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had complained that power was to be taken away from the South of England and transferred to the North; but the hon. Baronet had given no reason for the continuance of power in the hands of a minority in the Southern counties. Even the hon. Baronet had complained that the number of Members for the Metropolis was too large. As against that he thought he might put the complaint made last night by another Conservative Member, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), who had complained bitterly that London was too poorly represented. In his opinion, there was not any greater anomaly in this case than must necessarily exist in other instances. The hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had begun his able speech by making an

attack upon the Boundary Commissioners. The Boundary Commissioners were gentlemen whose work as regarded England and Scotland had been generally satisfactory to those concerned. In England their decisions had been received with almost universal satisfaction, with only a few isolated exceptions in very special cases, in which dissatisfaction had proceeded from a section of one political Party. In Scotland objections had been taken to one or two of their schemes by the Liberal Party—objections which he thought they would hardly be able to maintain. It was a curious fact that in Ireland practically the same gentlemen, acting on the same principles, had been bitterly attacked. Sir John Lambert and Sir Francis Sandford, who had acted as Commissioners in England, had had complete knowledge of the schemes relating to Ireland. The Irish Commissioners met in London under the supervision of Sir John Lambert. The Irish Assistant Commissioners also came to London; and the whole of the Irish Commission met again in London after the local inquiries had been held, when the whole of the schemes settled by the Commissioners were gone into in the utmost detail by the Commissioners, who had before them all the newspaper reports of what had passed at the local inquiries, and after sitting in London for several days consecutively they came to a unanimous decision on the whole of the schemes, and Sir John Lambert and Sir Francis Sandford were just as responsible for those schemes as they were for those relating to England or Scotland. Sir John Lambert was an official of immense experience, and one whose retirement from the Public Service almost amounted to a national calamity. In spite of the extreme delicacy of his health, Sir John Lambert had thrown himself in the most gallant way into that labour as a volunteer, and his services in connection with that Commission deserved to be recognized by the strongest and warmest appreciation of the House. Sir Francis Sandford, an official of great experience, had likewise worked as a volunteer on that inquiry; he had given to it an enormous amount of time and labour, and was entitled to the sincere thanks of the House for his valuable services. It was remarked that the Commission for Ireland was an after thought. And why was it an after thought? The fact was that the Government were so much afraid that, through the strength of Party feeling in Ireland, it would be hopeless to secure the Commission which would command the confidence of all Parties, and, therefore, it was desirable to leave the preliminary inquiries to be conducted by the Boundary Department of the Royal Engineers, under the general supervision of Sir John Lambert and Sir Francis Sandford. This, however, was objected to in Parliament, and in the Irish Press; and the Government thereupon felt themselves bound to appoint a Commission for Ireland, as in the case of England and Scotland. The question of Catholic and Protestant unfortunately entered into that question of boundaries, and he might mention the fact that two of the Commissioners were Catholics. The hon. Member alleged that Lord Spencer had issued secret instructions to the Commission. He did not know whether the hon. Member made that statement as a rhetorical flourish, or whether he really believed it. [Mr. Healy said, that he believed it.] Well, Lord Spencer had exactly followed in the instructions given to the Irish Commissioners the terms of the instructions which he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had issued to the English Commissioners; and he was certain that Lord Spencer had not issued further instructions in any way altering or varying the instructions which were before the House. He was sure that Lord Spencer would not have issued further instructions to the Commissioners without consulting him. Now, he had already said that the Commissioners were unanimous in the whole of their recommendations. He went further. He had seen some of the attacks which had been made in the Irish newspapers and in that House against the Irish schemes; and having gone through the whole of those schemes himself with Sir John Lambert, he was bound to say, speaking as far as he could do without intimate local knowledge, that he was prepared fully to support and to justify the decisions which had been come to by the Boundary Commissioners. The hon. Member had paid a high compliment to the original schemes of the Commissioners. Those original schemes were merely a tentative division of the counties made here in London, without very

intimate local knowledge, and made to be thrown on the table for discussion at a local inquiry. It suited the hon. Member, now that they had been altered in a way which he disapproved, to say that he greatly regretted that the original schemes were not adopted. That was not the view that was taken when they first came out, for then violent attacks were made on those schemes in the newspapers which represented the opinions held by the hon. Member. *The Freeman's Journal*, for instance, said that they were prepared in ignorance. Now, he was not disposed to dispute that criticism. He believed that they were schemes prepared in ignorance. In some cases they omitted to show such important factors with regard to the division of counties as ranges of mountains across those counties. Generally speaking, moreover, the original schemes followed the baronies. The hon. Member had complained that a larger proportion of the schemes had been altered in Ulster than in the rest of Ireland. Now, as he had stated in the House before, the number of the schemes that had been altered in the rest of Ireland was nine as against seven in Ulster. The schemes altered were those for the county of Dublin—to which the hon. Member objected)—County Meath, Queen's County, County Westmeath, borough of Dublin, County Clare, County Cork, County Kerry, and county Mayo. Whether there was a greater or a less disproportion between the numbers altered in Ulster and in the rest of Ireland, he thought the reason for that must be obvious to the House. The Party to which the hon. Member belonged was in such undisputed possession of the counties in the rest of Ireland generally that there the matter was not fought at the local inquiries, and the schemes were not so thoroughly thrashed out as they were in the case of the Ulster counties. The hon. Member referred to the case of Antrim. Now, without single-Member districts, the Party to which the hon. Member belonged could not carry a single seat in that county.

MR. HEALY: But we could carry Donegal and Tyrone.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The hon. Member said that under the single-Member system the Catholics in Belfast would be voiceless, and that four Members on the other side would be returned. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) thought that was very doubtful; and, at any rate, he felt sure that within the next few months the hon. Member would not be quite so ready to proclaim that opinion. The hon. Member had made an attack on the Solicitor General for Ireland in regard to the division of the county of Kerry, apparently thinking that his hon. and learned Friend was in favour of the scheme which the Commissioners had adopted; but the scheme which they had adopted was not his hon. and learned Friend's scheme at all, and, in fact, nothing but his position as a Member of the Government would have induced his hon. and learned Friend to support the scheme for Derry which was now before the House.

MR. HEALY asked what was the Solicitor General's scheme?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE replied, that, even if he were able, he did not think it would be right for him to explain that. His hon. and learned Friend came to him long ago and stated in the strongest possible terms his objections to the scheme which the Government adopted and were now prepared to support. The hon. Member had attacked, county by county, the work done by the Commissioners. The House would have an opportunity of discussing those matters with more care when they were reached in Committee. But, being prepared to make himself responsible for those schemes, he thought it right to say a few words in regard to those of them which had been most strongly assailed. The hon. Member also objected to the division of Donegal, which, he said, crossed the lough; but it had to be remembered that the populations on both sides of the lough were engaged in the fishing industry, and spoke the Irish language, and the lough referred to was crossed by a very good ferry.

MR. SEXTON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that it is 30 miles wide, and 15 miles in length?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was informed that it was only three miles wide at the ferry.

MR. HEALY: But where is the ferry?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he did not know where the ferry was; but the hon. Member did not inform the House of a fact worth mentioning, that

in County Down the Nationalist Party themselves proposed a scheme which would have crossed Lough Strangford at a point much wider than in the case of Donegal.

MR. HEALY explained that in that case the people were so put together already for Petty Sessions and Poor Law purposes.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that everything which had been laid before him up to the present time confirmed him in his intention to support the scheme as proposed. The hon. Member next complained of the division of County Dublin. This case, however, was governed by precedents which they had created in England. The division of County Dublin consisted of a very large division and a very small division of equal populations, the large division being sparsely populated, and the small division being more densely populated. That was a plan which had been followed in districts where there was a large urban population and a large agricultural population in the same county. He considered this to be a wise plan to follow. He might cite some of the English county divisions as examples. For instance, there were the Jarrow and Tyne divisions. Most of the divisions of the county of Middlesex were very small; but the Uxbridge division, being mainly agricultural, comprised almost half the county. The case of County Dublin, therefore, would not have been a startling instance to the hon. Member if he had looked through the English maps and had observed similar cases in the English counties. The hon. Member also complained of the extension of the boundaries of Belfast, when a similar extension of boundaries had been denied to Dublin. In this matter, however, they had followed no equal course in England and Scotland as compared with Ireland. They had followed various courses in dealing with this question of suburbs as seemed best for the convenience of local cases, and of course that part of the scheme was open, like everything else, to full discussion. In regard to the schemes of the Boundary Commission, the hon. Member asked why the Government could not lay before the House full information, accompanied by maps, showing the difference between the original schemes prepared by the Commission and those which the House was asked to sanction. If such a course was assented to in the case of Ireland, it must also be assented to in the cases of England and Scotland. The documents were of enormous bulk, and their opinion was that they did not believe it would tend to produce a unanimous or general consensus of opinion in the House were they to produce a large number of maps for the same county, showing how it was divided in different ways. The House would get into an interminable discussion, and would never reach a conclusion at all. He also declined to produce the voluminous mass of facts and arguments which were laid before the Commissioners in the local inquiries.

MR. HEALY: Will you give them to us in the contentious cases?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE replied, that all cases were contentious more or less. Where the main principles of the scheme were uncontested there was, perhaps, a dispute with regard to one or two parishes. The hon. Gentleman must remember that the notes of evidence were of enormous bulk, that the number of inquiries held was very large, and that the subjects of discussion at the inquiries were debated with reference to maps which could not now be found, and which could not be placed before the House in a satisfactory manner. The matter, indeed, was one of extraordinary difficulty; but he pointed out to the hon. Member that in most cases the newspaper reports were full and ample. The hon. Member next raised the question of University representation, and referred to it as a means by which the Scotch representation might be increased —generously proposing to take away the representation of Trinity College, Dublin, and to hand it over to the Scotch Members. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had informed the House the previous evening that, although he was strongly opposed to University representation, and although he felt himself free to vote any day for a separate Bill or a Resolution proposing to disfranchise the Universities of the Three Kingdoms, still he could not support a proposal to deal with it in the present Redistribution Bill. It had to be remembered that the present Bill was received as a compromise of opinions of various kinds, and as a compromise he intended to support it, and to vote against the proposal to

strike the University representation out of the Bill. With respect to the other point raised with respect to the representation of the Royal Universities of Ireland, and the suggestion that they should either have separate representation or be thrown into Trinity College, that was a matter that would be fully discussed in Committee, and he would, therefore, not enter into the question at present.

MR. SEXTON said, that it appeared from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that the Solicitor General for Ireland was undergoing an agonizing struggle in this matter; but as he saw through good and evil fortune the hon. and learned Gentleman had maintained a stern fidelity to the Government, he did not think he would be removed from his fealty by the division of the county of Derry. The Solicitor General, he suspected, was a man more fascinated by the atmosphere of the Four Courts than Westminster; and if he should not succeed in being returned at the next Election, he was one of the Members of the House who would least regret the result. With reference to the question under discussion, he would impress upon the attention of the House the fact that at the time of the Union Ireland had half the population of Great Britain. In 1846 it contained a third of the population. The decrease in the population of Ireland was due to the Imperial policy which had delayed and denied agrarian reform. If the English Government had passed 40 years ago the Land Act of 1870 or of 1881, the population of Ireland at the present time would not have been such as to entitle hon. Members to argue for a decrease in the number of Irish Members. If those Acts had been passed thus early, the Irish population would not have diminished as it had done, and a reason would then have existed entitling Ireland to claim a great increase in its representation. If the Government placed any confidence in the Land Act of 1881, they ought to look forward to an increase of the population of Ireland, and as a matter of fact the emigration which in 1883 amounted to 105,000, fell last year to 72,000. During 1884 the population of Ireland remained about stationary. He believed that the Irish Members had an unanswerable claim to have the evidence and the maps in the Office of the right hon. Gentleman laid before them. The right hon. Gentleman had refused to furnish the facts upon which the Commissioners formed their conclusions, whilst he himself was admittedly unable to answer legal questions.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I will answer them later on.

MR. SEXTON said, it was said by the right hon. Baronet that Lord Spencer did not issue any secret instructions to the Boundary Commissioners. However that might be, his public instructions were materially different in one particular to those issued to the English Commissioners; for whereas the English Commissioners had power to inquire when it was desirable to extend the boundaries of any borough, the Irish Commissioners were only to inquire into the desirability of extending the boundaries of those boroughs which were "proposed to be divided by the Bill." This was an unjustifiable departure from the instructions given to the English Commissioners.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that in England the Commissioners were instructed not to alter the boundaries of boroughs or cities such as Dublin, where the extension would alter the number of Members allocated.

MR. SEXTON said, that the right hon. Baronet had spoken of the propriety of including Kingstown in the City of Dublin; but he would remind him that Kingstown was seven miles away from the City of Dublin, while very large districts, such as Rathmines, were contiguous to it. What Lord Spencer did in Ireland was to alter the sense, meaning, and direction of the words of the instructions; and instead of allowing the Commissioners to recommend the extension of borough boundaries where they thought fit, and where it was desirable, his instructions were a most arbitrary and unjustifiable departure from the instructions given by the right hon. Baronet. The effect of these instructions was to shut out the cases of Dublin, Drogheda, and Limerick. In regard to the case of the City of Limerick, a very strong case could be made out. A slight extension of the boundaries would enable that ancient city to retain its present proportion of two Members. If a line were drawn from Derry to the County Cork, it would divide

the Island into two almost equal parts. The House would be surprised to hear that the Western moiety would, under this scheme, have only three borough Members. The population of Limerick was almost equal to that which would entitle it to an additional Member; and he believed that if boundaries were so extended as to include a couple of streets, which were actually physically a part of the existing city, this would be accomplished. Lord Spencer's instructions had shut out the case of Drogheda, precluding any alteration of the existing boundary. This was a contrast to the course which had been followed in the case of the town of Warwick, in England, a borough which Mr. Speaker represented in that House. Warwick had a population of only 8,000 persons, and in order to secure the seat for the Speaker, the Government had added to it the town of Leamington, which was another place altogether, and five or six miles distant from Warwick. And yet the Commissioners in Ireland refused to add one street to the town of Drogheda. He believed that it was essential that the evidence which had been taken with regard to these contested schemes should not be withheld from the House. The contentious schemes which the Irish Members intended to oppose in the House were only seven in number, and he did not believe that the production of the evidence in these cases would involve any extraordinary bulk of material. They would not prove at all an intolerable demand upon the resources of the Queen's Printing Office. The right hon. Baronet stated that he knew from the first that the decisions of the Commissioners would be attacked. Would any Member of the Government explain the curious fact that in the schemes which were not contested on account of jerrymandering, the Commissioners had not made any material change in the original schemes? But they had been altered where political and Party objects were to be served. Lord Salisbury, in reply to a Memorial from Ulster, had stated that the effect of the work of the Boundary Commissioners upon the Irish Tory Party would depend upon the spirit in which the Boundary Commissioners performed their work. He would ask, however, what business had these gentlemen to show any spirit at all in a work calling only for common sense and impartiality? It was entirely a question of maps, Census Returns, and physical division of the country, and also a question of compactness of area. There was no occasion for the display of any spirit at all. Well, these gentlemen had responded to the appeal, and did show spirit. Wherever the people's agents accepted the original scheme, and it was objected to by either of the two anti-popular factions, the result was that the Commissioners, in spite of the support of the people to the original scheme, altered it at the wish of the anti-popular Parties. In any case in which the popular Party objected to the schemes, they, on the contrary, were allowed to remain unaltered. The instructions to the Commissioners were such that it was possible for them to discharge their duty without regard to political motives; and therefore the Irish Members wished to see the original schemes and maps, to compare them with the final maps, and to trace the processes by which the changes were arrived at. If this were not done every arrangement proposed would be strenuously resisted. In Dublin County the divisions had been adopted which were proposed by the Orange Emergency Association, and they did not accord in any way with the instructions given to the Commissioners. Regard was not paid to compactness or the pursuits of the population. It was said that the divisions had been made respectively urban and rural. He wanted to know why Rathmines, Booterstown, Blackrock, Monkstown, and the other Southern districts were so arranged as to go together, and exclude all the other urban districts to the North of Dublin, such as Howth, Clontarf, and Malahide, which were just as much of an urban character as the others? Simply because the former were expected to give a Tory vote and the latter to vote on the popular side. Dublin City had been treated differently from Belfast for the sake of depriving Dublin of a sixth Member. It was time the representation of the Universities should cease; the state of things which had made it necessary had passed away. University Members had no special qualification, and graduates had votes as occupiers or owners. The Irish Members contested seven cases, and, unless maps and documents were produced, it would be

their duty to occupy time in raising discussions upon all these cases.

Mr. KENNY said, it was lamentable that the borough representation of Ireland should be practically wiped out. The proposal of the Government would reduce the borough representation of the counties of Limerick and Clare to one Member. The Government scheme only retained Members for 15 Irish boroughs. It was not calculated to improve the condition of the Irish boroughs to deprive them of Parliamentary representation. He was the more desirous of stating the case of Limerick City in the House, because the instructions to the Boundary Commissioners made it impossible for the case to be presented in the Court. The Corporation of Limerick had forwarded to him a series of statements in support of their claim that their representation should remain unchanged. It was an an ancient city, and had been the seat of several Parliaments. Its manufactures, trade, and commerce entitled it to retain its present representation. Many inconsistent arrangements had been made, apparently with no other object than that of distributing the strength of the Nationalist Party; and it was only natural that the strongest protests should be made against the undisguised jerrymandering of which the Commissioners had been made the instruments. The course taken by the Commissioners in Donegal was an audacious piece of jerrymandering. In that county districts were to be brought together which were practically as far apart as Scotland and Ireland. The Commissioners had actually joined in one constituency two districts which were separated by Lough Swilly. As to the Universities, whatever were the original motives for giving them representation, these motives had long since disappeared. The original intention was that learned men might be sent to Parliament to assist in promoting education; but that had ceased to be necessary now for a long time. He found that for the last 85 years the Representatives of Dublin University had been lawyers. As to Armagh, the county had been divided quite regardless of the instructions to the Commissioners, and at the instigation of local Tories for party purposes, and more inconvenient and absurd divisions could not have been devised. The case of Londonderry was an extraordinary one. It had been stated that the Solicitor General for Ireland sent a gentleman to represent him when the Commissioners held a Court for the purpose of considering the divisions of the county. He believed the hon. and and learned Gentleman objected to the present scheme, which savoured of jerrymandering. The hon. and learned Gentleman ought in that case to use his great influence with the Government in order to get a just and equal division of the county which he represented. He hoped the Solicitor General for Ireland would state his views upon the subject.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, that as the hon. Member had referred to him he would state what he knew of the matter. Derry was undoubtedly not the last case which the Boundary Commissioners considered, although, being one of the counties to the extreme North, it was among the last. What advantage any division, or portion of a division, could attain by being last considered, he could not conceive. The original scheme for the division of the county of Derry was manifestly framed from the maps of the Ordnance Department, and without local knowledge. The county of Londonderry, amongst other baronies, comprised three which were parallel with each other, and included within this area was a large proportion of the Roman Catholic element of the county. The proposed division of the county divided the three baronies. Further, it divided three parishes. It left a mountain range between one portion and another, and left totally out of view similarity of constituency. That division was opposed, and in the speech of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), which was more amusing than accurate, it was said that he gave instructions to someone to attend on his behalf. That was not the case; but on boundaries coming to be fixed, three parties attended—one representing the Nationalists, another the Liberal, and another the Conservative Association. It was perfectly clear that both these Associations objected to the proposed division of the county of Derry upon obvious grounds—the want of geographical compactness, the fact that a mountain range ran through it, and the want of similarity. The proposal made by the Li-

beral Association was not adopted, but that put forward by the Conservative Association was followed. The Commissioners had adhered to the rule laid down for the Commissioners; they observed geographical compactness; they did not divide parishes as in the proposed scheme; and they observed regularity. They left the mountain range as a division between two districts, and they had passing through each division a central line of railway connecting the particular division with one centre. Objections were made as to other divisions which he did not intend to enter upon; but, as regarded Donegal, he was forced to the conclusion that hon. Members below the Gangway, when the result was against them upon one ground, used the same ground in another case in an opposite direction. For his own part, he honestly believed that in the schemes which had been approved the Commissioners had observed the condition of geographical compactness, had acted up to their instructions, and had not been influenced by Party or political relations.

Mr. EWART said, he would not occupy the attention of the House more than a few seconds. Indeed, the debate had come on him by surprise, and the long speeches which they had heard seemed to him as only suited to the Committee stage of the Bill. He would not have intervened at that time; but the case of Belfast had been so pointedly referred to by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), and noticed by the right hon. Gentleman who had charge of the Bill and others, that he felt it incumbent on him to correct some inaccuracies in the speech of the hon. Member. The Solicitor General had characterized that speech as "more amusing than accurate." He would designate it as one of singular exaggeration. The hon. Member, in his effort to sustain the charge against the Boundary Commission of partizanship, had made the astounding statement that, whereas Belfast was entitled to only two Members, the Commissioners had so enlarged the boundaries as to entitle it to four Members. Now, the House would be enabled to form their opinion as to the value of the statement. The Redistribution Bill, as the House knew, gave Belfast four Members, and indicated a boundary with sufficient population for that purpose. Now, if he were disposed to make a charge of partizanship against the Commissioners, he thought he had some ground for it, because, though the Redistribution Bill fixed a boundary and gave Belfast four Members, yet the Commissioners had needlessly extended the boundaries, taking from the County Antrim many thousands and from the County Down a considerable number, thereby, as his friends alleged, weakening the Conservative interest in both counties; but though he had their complaint and others about the counties, yet he would be slow to assume or make the charge of partizanship against the Commissioners. He would not follow the hon. Member for Monaghan into the subject of the respective numbers of the Nationalists and Loyalists that would be returned under the new law. The hon. Member had by far overstated the number of Loyalists that would be returned. He (Mr. Ewart) repeated that though by numbers they were entitled to one-third of the representation—that was a simple question of arithmetic — yet it would be impossible for them to return even one-sixth. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had referred to a letter of Lord Salisbury in which he spoke of the spirit in which the Boundary Commissioners should proceed in their work. Well, the only construction that could be put on that was that it meant a spirit of favouritism. [*Laughter by Home Rulers.*] Hon. Members laughed; but all the noble Lord meant by the words was that the duty of the Commissioners ought to be conducted in a spirit of fairness. For himself and the Party with which he acted he totally disclaimed any desire that the duty should be discharged in any other spirit.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, there had been a great deal of discussion this afternoon on the subject of redistribution in Ireland. He would not venture on that dangerous ground; but before Mr. Speaker left the Chair, he would like to say a few words with reference to what had happened with regard to the scheme of redistribution of seats in Scotland. As the House might be aware, a certain amount of dissatisfaction was caused by the inefficient way in which redistribution, and especially the grouping of boroughs, was dealt with by the Bill. It was felt by all

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Scotch Liberals that the system of grouping of boroughs was altogether out of date, and not calculated to answer the requirements that were now necessary in Scotland. Some time ago the President of the Local Government Board gave out in the House to the Scotch Members that if they would consider amongst themselves what would be desirable and right in the matter of redistribution, and more especially with regard to the grouping of Scotch boroughs, and making the principle more satisfactory than at present, the Government would be willing to take the matter into their consideration. With that view the Scottish Members had got into relation with the Lord Advocate, who, at once responding to their desires, had done his best to frame an improved scheme. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had gone into the subject very elaborately, and produced a scheme which he (Mr. A. Elliot) thought an immense improvement upon the scheme proposed by the Bill. The Lord Advocate had then asked the Scottish Members to meet him in a private room in this House, and talk over the scheme which he had prepared. That scheme contained very considerable changes from the scheme of the Bill, and it was gone into clause by clause and word by word by the Scottish Members together. He might say that, although the Scottish Members did not approve of all the Lord Advocate's suggestions, still they accepted and thoroughly approved of nine-tenths of them; and he thought those changes would be adopted *nemine contradicente* by the Scottish Members. At all events, the Government was now in possession, not only of the draft scheme of the Lord Advocate, but of that scheme with the views of the Scottish Members upon it. One of the proposals which he, for one, supported very heartily was to put the villages which had hitherto been put out of the counties back into the counties. He said "villages," because the small burghs with which the Lord Advocate proposed to deal were towns with less than 1,000 inhabitants, and the Lord Advocate thought it desirable that they should go back into the counties of which they formed a part. He should not have taken up the time of the House by bringing this matter before it if he had found that Amendments had been put down by the Lord Advocate or some other Member of the Government to carry out the recommendations of the Lord Advocate, endorsed by the great majority of the Scottish Members. There were some matters which required to be taken into consideration with other matters, one being the inclusion of Portobello and Musselburgh in the City of Edinburgh. What could be simpler than for the Lord Advocate to have put down the proposal to deal with Portobello—and, so far as he knew, there was no opposition to it—that Portobello and Musselburgh should be grouped with Edinburgh? He hoped he was not asking too much of the Government when he asked them to tell the House what they proposed to do to carry out the proposals of their own Lord Advocate, approved by the majority of Scottish Members. If, as he did not doubt, they intended to give effect to these recommendations, he hoped they would put their Amendments on the Paper at the earliest moment, so that they might know what they had to deal with.

MR. DAWSON complained that the towns in Ireland and the industrial interests connected with them had been almost entirely sacrificed to the counties. In future only 15 towns in Ireland would be represented; and how, under such circumstances, were the voices of trade and industry to made themselves heard. He could not refer to this matter without expressing his gratification at the deep interest which the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) took in the prosperity and progress of Irish industry; and he could assure the hon. Baronet that his efforts in that direction had been highly appreciated in Ireland. He only wished that Englishmen of that character could be multiplied. He especially pleaded for a reconsideration of the case of the City of Limerick, to which another Member ought to be given. The population of the city amounted to 145,000, or 45,000 beyond the sum which entitled it to the two Members which it now enjoyed. Indeed, by a reasonable extension of the boundary of the city it would be easy to procure the requisite number of additional inhabitants to entitle the borough to a third Member. In the interests of commerce and industry, it was very desirable that the representation of Limerick should be thus increased. Its sentimental claims to

consideration were also very great. Its Charter was only less ancient than that of the City of London, and it had ever been famous in peace and war. As the legend on the Civic banner said—

"Urbs antiqua fuit, studiisque asperrima belli."

He contended, therefore, in consideration both of the historical claims of Limerick, and of its agricultural claims, and of its commercial claims, that the representation of that ancient borough should not be reduced.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he would express the hope that the House would consent to go into Committee on the Bill that afternoon. That was the anxious wish of the Government, and the moderate length at which hon. Members spoke was an indication, he thought, of their desire in the same direction. He thought the Question which had been asked by the hon. Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. A. Elliot) was a very reasonable one indeed. The Government had most carefully examined the scheme prepared by the Lord Advocate in the light which had been thrown upon it by the observations and expressions of opinion of the Scottish Members; and they had come to this conclusion—that the difference of opinion that existed on one or two of the points contained in that scheme would almost certainly be fatal to those points; and the impossibility of carrying out those points would very seriously endanger the others. In endeavouring to revise the scheme, it was brought at every moment before the notice of the Government; and the more the House examined the scheme the more it would be brought before the notice of the House, for the scheme was a very carefully constructed map—he might almost call it a puzzle, but it would not be a puzzle if it were carefully examined—and it would be seen that it was almost impossible to displace any one piece of it without displacing the others. Still, the Government was desirous to meet the suggestions and criticisms of Scottish Members, and embody, as far as possible, the results of their deliberations in Amendments. Notably, they earnestly hoped to meet the case of the burgh of Leith, which was, perhaps, the strongest case of the many which had been put forward by the Lord Advocate and viewed favourably by the Scottish Members. He would respond to the appeal of his hon. Friend by saying that they would have a consultation with the Lord Advocate, and at the very earliest opportunity determine what Amendments might be placed upon the Paper. Coming to other speeches that had been made, he had to express his surprise that the scheme before the House should have been attacked from below the Gangway opposite, for he had not imagined that the scheme could be seriously distasteful to the Irish Members. In fact, it would, in his opinion, be difficult for any Member, even one sharing the sympathies of the hon. Gentlemen to whom he was referring, to frame a scheme which should favour those sympathies to a greater degree, and, at the same time, have the slightest chance before the House. The Bill had been framed upon certain broad lines and just principles, which favoured Nationalist views just as much as they ought to be favoured, and no less. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), alluding to the action of the Boundary Commissioners, complained that Kingstown and other suburbs had not been added to Dublin in the same way that outlying suburbs had been added to the borough of Belfast; and the hon. Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny) spoke in a passionless way of what he called the shameful system of jerrymandering that had been carried out in the County Donegal. It was sufficient to reply that the character of the Commissioners was so high that such an epithet as shameful could not possibly be applied to their conduct. The hon. Member for Ennis and others complained that the Irish urban representation had been too greatly reduced; that too little regard had been had to the claim to representation of the commerce and industry of Ireland. It was curious that the hon. Members below the Gangway opposite were not the only people who raised an objection of that kind. Those who thought that the National Party would gain too much advantage by the Bill had been at great pains to devise some method by which that result could be mitigated; and their original plan of having recourse to proportional or minority representation having fallen to the ground, they now wished to gain their ends by diminishing the rural representation of Ireland and increasing the number of borough Members, their idea

being that small boroughs could be grouped together as in Scotland. He was not going to argue against that proposal; but he only referred to it to show that hon. Members below the Gangway on the other side, when they complained of the small amount of representation given to the urban element in Ireland, ought to be careful what they were doing, because they were opening a door and letting out a stream of water which, under certain circumstances, might become a serious flood. The towns of Drogheda and Limerick had been specially mentioned in the course of the debate. With reference to the first of these, he thought it would be at once seen that no exceptional favour could be shown it. Because the inhabitants of a town were only a little below 15,000 in number, it could not be excepted from the general slaughter. He knew of a town in England which was supposed to have come within Schedule I. of the Bill, because at the time of the Census a larger number than usual of its inhabitants were pursuing the avocation of deep-sea fishing, the weather at the time favouring that pursuit. If they were once to make any exceptions from the operation of Schedule I., they would never know where to stop. The hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Dawson) had pleaded that Limerick should retain her second seat, because she had been famous in peace and in war. Canterbury and Durham had also been famous in these respects; and why should Limerick be treated differently from these places, each of which would lose a seat? The City of London, like the City of Limerick, would lose half of her representation. Then the hon. Member referred to the City of London, and said that it was treated differently from Limerick. Now, how had Limerick been treated? One Member had been taken away from Limerick, but two Members had been taken away from London. The Government had treated Limerick exactly as they had treated London. He had referred to this question of the Irish boroughs, because it had not been dealt with previously from the Treasury Bench. He would not go back to the question of the counties, because that had been discussed by two of his Colleagues. The hon. Member for Ennis, however, had referred especially to the way in which the Boundary Commissioners had dealt with the county of Armagh. The reason why the Commissioners had altered their original scheme with regard to that county was, if he might be permitted to say so, because they had made a mistake in the division of the county in the first instance, and they were compelled to rectify it. Each of the divisions of Armagh averaged 51,000, 52,000, and 53,000; but it was found that North Armagh contained fewer than these, and in order to bring that division up to the requisite number, a portion of South Armagh was cut off and added to it, because the latter was a mountainous district. The map of Armagh was one which carried conviction with it, and he earnestly wished, as a justification for the policy of the Commissioners, that the House would look at the map of Armagh, and see exactly how the mountainous district, with its particular agricultural industry, was separated from the flat country, with its agricultural industry. Then, the hon. Member had referred to Dublin. In that case, the course pursued by the Commissioners was unusual, because the position of the county of Dublin was extremely unusual. It was one of those very rare counties in Ireland which resembled a good many English counties. There were three sorts of population—the population which lived in the city, the population which lived in the country, and the population which lived largely and thickly in the suburbs. The county had to be divided in two. Divided by the population, it was necessary to make a large division where the population was scanty, and a small division where the population was close; while each division had been made as compact as possible. If the Irish Members would look at the maps of Northumberland and Durham on the Tyne side, they would see that the new divisions in those counties corresponded exactly to the divisions in Dublin County. In conclusion, he earnestly trusted that hon. Members would view this question of Ireland as a whole, and would try, as far as possible, to put out of their minds any idea that any conscious effort had been made not to give fair play to any party in Ireland. He hoped, also, that they would see the advantage of settling these questions at a period when political passions connected with elections had been lulled by the passing of the

Franchise Bill, and would not wait until such a time that they could not be dealt with justly, calmly, and fairly.

MR. W. J. CORBET said, that the original instructions issued to the Boundary Commissioners had been very favourably received in Ireland. But how had those instructions been carried out? In the instructions given to the Commissioners, they found it stated they were—

"To hear any objections to the proposed constitution of the divisions, and receive proposals for their alteration. It will be convenient that the substance of such objections and proposals should be handed in to the Commissioner or Assistant Commissioner in writing."

In accordance with that invitation, some of the most influential gentlemen, clergymen and others, appeared before Mr. Commissioner White, at Wicklow, on the part of the popular side, and laid their views before him in favour of dividing the county into North and South instead of East and West. He intimated that such was the original view of the Boundary Commissioners, and asked to have the alternative scheme of the objections put in writing, assuring them it would receive due consideration. The proposal was handed in, but did not appear to have been taken the least notice of, and was not even mentioned in the Commissioners' Report. In the recommendations of the Commissioners it was proposed to give three baronies to East Wicklow, with an area of 165,389 acres, valuation £151,123, population 34,599; to West Wicklow five baronies, area 334,788 acres, population 35,787. That practically gave two-thirds of the county to West, and one-third, with the whole of the coast line, to East Wicklow. In the County Louth the seaboard had been almost equally divided between the North and South Divisions of Dundalk and Drogheda. The proposal laid before the Commissioners on behalf of the people of Wicklow was to divide the county into North and South, giving four baronies to each, which left for North Wicklow an area of 252,329 acres, valuation £134,861, population 35,416; to South Wicklow an area of 247,848 acres, valuation £137,519, population 34,970. The question of compactness had been much dwelt on by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) in his speech awhile ago, and there could be no doubt on which side the compactness lay in the two proposals. As for keeping all the fishing and seafaring interests together, there was no reason for departing, in the division of Wicklow, from the course adopted in County Louth. In Committee he would oppose the scheme of the Commissioners to the utmost of his power.

MR. BUCHANAN said, he had heard with great disappointment the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; because, so far as he understood that statement, it seemed to imply that very little was to be done to carry out the Lord Advocate's scheme. He wished to point out that the proposals in the scheme were of three kinds. There was the proposal to merge certain of the small burghs in the counties, the proposal to re-group certain districts of burghs, and the proposal to constitute certain new constituencies. The last might give rise to differences of opinion; but in regard to the other two proposals, he had a note of the results of the meeting of the Scottish Members with the Lord Advocate, and he would state the result in answer to his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who said that there was a great difference of opinion in regard to the proposals. The result was that in the one for the amalgamation of Bute and Argyll the minority was only eight, and the other proposal of the same description—namely, for the creation of a new county constituency of the Hebrides, was carried unanimously. In regard to the other parts of the scheme, some of the Scottish Members did not think they went far enough; but they were willing to consider them on their merits, and they had all been looking forward to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate placing his Amendments on the Paper. It had been a matter of great disappointment that nothing of this sort had been done, and he gathered from the speech of his right hon. Friend that nothing of the sort was to be proposed. The right hon. Gentleman had also adduced the argument, which he thought a very strange one, that this Bill was a kind of puzzle in which no piece could be displaced. He was surprised that the Government had not used this argument last night when they were pressing

for increased representation; and he hoped that when the question of increasing the number of Scottish Representatives was again raised the Government would make use of his right hon. Friend's argument, and insist equally strongly that that part of the Bill should not be interfered with. The right hon. Gentleman had further said that there would be a final consultation as to what Amendments might be placed upon the Paper. For his part, he would much rather the right hon. Gentleman had said what Amendments would be put upon the Paper. In reality it came to this—that they could not get any definite promise out of the Government to fulfil the expectations which they had held out to the Scottish Members. It came to this—that the Amendments which the vast majority of the Scottish Members desired would depend, not upon the opinion of the majority of the Scottish Members who sat on this side of the House, but on the small minority of Scottish Members who sat opposite. This whole question showed the difficulty that attached to the consideration of the Bill owing to the peculiar nature of its inception, and to the fact of the Government being bound by pledges to right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He would firmly urge upon the Government that they should endeavour to redeem the expectations they held out to the Scottish Members. The proposals laid before the Lord Advocate were of a most moderate character; and it was exceedingly disappointing that, after all, nothing whatever was to be done. He was sure that the right hon. Gentleman would see that very great dissatisfaction and disappointment would be occasioned in Scotland if this matter were neglected.

MR. LEWIS said, he thought that the attention of the House should be directed to the monstrous anomalies in the representation of the Metropolis under the new scheme. The Bill, he understood, was introduced for the purpose of correcting anomalies, and yet he found that there were really more anomalies in the construction of the new Metropolitan constituencies than ever existed before. A Return had recently been issued giving the population in the new boroughs proposed to be created in the Metropolis. Under the new scheme Chelsea was to have a population of 88,000 inhabitants, with one Member; while its next door neighbour, Fulham, with a population of 42,000, was to have the same representation. Then he would take the case of the two St. George's, one poor, the other rich. St. George's-in-the-East, with 47,000, was to be made equal to St. George's Hanover Square, with 89,000 inhabitants. Hampstead, with a population of 45,462, and Lewisham, with a population of 86,150, were each to have one Member. The like anomaly appeared in the case of neighbouring boroughs; Holborn and Finsbury were next door neighbours, yet Holborn had a population of 82,000 and Finsbury of only 46,000. Taking various cases together, the result was that sometimes 86,000 persons returned a Member, and sometimes only 40,000. So far as the new constituencies went, therefore, the same anomalies appeared in them as existed at present. How was it if the old constituencies were compared with the new? Westminster, with 229,000 inhabitants, had been divided into three one-Member boroughs. St. Pancras, with a population of 236,000, had received four Members; and more monstrous still, Kensington and Marylebone, with 318,061, were to have four Members together; while Mile End and Paddington, with 320,681, were to have six Members. These anomalies were altogether unaccountable, and bore the trace of the cloven foot. He thought that the anomalies which were to exist under the new system in the representation of London were a discredit to anyone who had had the drawing up of the details of the Bill; they were clearly opposed to propriety, fair play, and common sense; and he thought the House was entitled to some explanation from the Government on the subject. London itself was satisfied with its increased representation, and therefore did not object so much to these anomalies; but those who were to have their representation lopped off were entitled to question the fairness of such arrangements. Another point to which he wished to call attention was the case of towns which might, by a small extension into their suburbs, have retained their representation. This had been done in the case of Warwick, which had only 11,800 of population, whereas Wigan had lost one of its Members, although it was only just

below the necessary number. In fact no other case than that of Warwick could be shown in which the limits of a borough had been extended for the express purpose of saving its dual representation; and he considered that some reason ought to be given for the exceptional course which had been taken in that matter.

Mr. RAIKES said, he did not intend to enter into a discussion of the points raised by the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Lewis), because he had placed Amendments on the Paper which would be considered in Committee, with the object of dealing with London in a different way from that proposed by the Bill. His proposal was to retain the existing boroughs instead of creating the numerous new constituencies proposed, and to apportion to each that fair share of representation to which it might be entitled. They would then be sub-divided into wards, exactly as Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, and other large places were divided, which would be much more equal in population than anything which would be insured by the Government scheme. He rose, however, to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would have two maps made and hung in the Library of the House, the one showing the proposed divisions of London under the scheme as embodied in the Bill, and the other showing the representation of London as at present existing?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, that he was afraid that it would be difficult to manage such a map, as the scale on which the maps were drawn was very large. He would be glad, however, to give any information in his power upon the subject.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he must express his disappointment that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had not given his promised explanation as to the grounds on which Warwick was treated differently from other parts of the Kingdom. Hon. Gentlemen from Ireland had urged the claims of Limerick and Drogheda; and it would have been only reasonable for the right hon. Gentleman to state why those places were to suffer, in the one total disfranchisement, and in the other partial disfranchisement, while Warwick was to retain separate representation. The Scotch Members were consulted as to the rearrangement of the seats in Scotland; and, therefore, he thought it would have been but fair that the Irish Members should have had an opportunity of expressing their views upon the arrangement of the electoral districts in their country. Reference had been made to the fact that Belfast was the only borough in Ireland in the case of which instructions were given to the Boundary Commissioners. If additions had been made to other boroughs—to Limerick and Drogheda, for instance—they would not have been disfranchised, as was now proposed by the Bill. In his opinion, the two boroughs he mentioned had been very hardly treated; and if anything could be done by which they would retain their present representation, it was well it should be done. As to the County Cavan, he could not complain of the decision of the Commissioners. The original scheme proposed by the Boundary Commissioners was one with which he had no fault to find. His hon. Colleague did not take the trouble to attend before the Commissioners as he (Mr. Biggar) did; but he wrote a note to the Commissioners complaining of their scheme, and intimating that he would bring the matter before the House of Commons. By the scheme of the Commissioners Cavan was divided into two divisions, East and West, by a line running almost due North and South. His hon. Colleague proposed that the county should be divided into North and South by a line running from East to West. He (Mr. Biggar) could not see that, had his hon. Colleague's suggestion been adopted, any difference would have been made in the representation of the county. The Loyalist Party in Ireland, he also observed, sought to exaggerate the amount of power which the Nationalists would obtain under that Bill. Now, he believed that in the county of Antrim not a single Nationalist Member would be elected under the provisions of the Bill; and in other places, also, the measure would operate very unfairly towards that Party. He thought that under a system of proportional representation, or by the cumulative vote, the result in many English constituencies would be that the Irish Nationalists would be able to return a Member of their way of thinking; and that would be quite as beneficial for their interest as the Bill

now before the House would be. However, as the Bill had been accepted by the Leaders of the two great Parties in the House, there was no chance of success for the advocates of any other measure at present. But as to the details of the proposed redistribution in different constituencies, he maintained that there was very great cause of complaint. In the county of Londonderry, for instance, they had altered the original scheme, and in the boundary scheme which they now recommended they paid no attention to community of interest in the populations which they had grouped together. They had cut into two a large Catholic population, which were most intimately connected, intermarrying with each other, attending the same fairs and markets, and having the same interests, and managed so to draw the line of division as to weaken the Catholic and National Party in each division, and prevent them from electing a Member in either. In the face of that decision of the Boundary Commission, he asserted that if the evidence which had been laid before the Commissioners could be brought before that House, it would be seen that it was proved to demonstration that the Commissioners had gone absolutely against the weight of evidence.

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *To-morrow*.

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked, What Business was to be taken to-morrow, and also whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer meant to go on with Supply on Monday?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, the Government proposed to take Supply to-morrow — the Naval Supplementary Estimates first, then the remaining Civil Service Supplementary Estimates. The Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill would be taken after Supply to-morrow. It was also proposed to take Supply on Monday.

In answer to further Questions,

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, the Government would bring on the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill at any opportunity they could get to-morrow. It was their desire to get the Speaker out of the Chair; but the clauses would not be proceeded with at an hour inconvenient to the House.

MOTIONS.

KITCHEN AND REFRESHMENT ROOMS (HOUSE OF COMMONS).

APPOINTMENT AND NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Mr. HEALY said, he would like to have a Return of the attendance on this Committee. He did not think they should re-elect to the Committee deadheads who never attended its meetings.

Lord KENSINGTON said, he could not give the Return at that moment.

Mr. SEXTON remarked, that he believed the hon. Member for the City of Dublin (Mr. Maurice Brooks) very rarely attended the meetings of this Committee. Indeed, he rarely attended the House. However, if they desired to appoint the Committee now, they would not raise further objection.

Standing Committee *appointed* to control the arrangements of the Kitchen and Refreshment Rooms, in the department of the Serjeant at Arms attending this House.

Committee *nominated* of,—Mr. Maurice Brooks, Mr. Henry Edwards, Sir Gabriel Goldney, Mr. Duff, Lord Kensington, Mr. Monk, Mr. Muntz, Captain O'Shea, Mr. Richard Power, Lord Henry Thynne, Mr. Armitstead, Mr. Thornhill, Mr. Sheil, and Sir William Hart Dyke:—Three to be the quorum.

REAL ASSETS ADMINISTRATION BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Bill to facilitate the administration of Deceased Persons Estates, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Arthur O'Connor and Mr. Warton.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 79.]

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (BOROUGH FUNDS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Woodall, Bill to amend an Act of the Session of the thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter ninety-one, intituled "An Act to authorise the application of Funds of Municipal Corporations and other governing bodies in certain cases," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Woodall, Mr. Edward Clarke, Mr. Jackson, and Mr. St. Aubyn.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 80.]

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (IRELAND) (BOROUGH FUNDS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. GRAY, Bill to authorise the application of Funds of Municipal Corporations and other governing bodies in Ireland in certain cases, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. GRAY, Mr. DAWSON, and Mr. MEAGHER.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 81.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 5th March, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Standing Orders, The Earl of Milltown, The Lord de Ros, and The Lord Sandhurst *added*.
PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Ecclesiastical Commissioners * (17).
Committee—Marriages Legalization * (19-30).
Committee — Report — Prevention of Crimes Amendment * (20).

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN (PERPETUITY GRANTS) BILL.

SECOND READING.

This Bill was on the list of Private Bills, but the Chairman of Committees having failed to refer to it.

THE EARL OF LEITRIM rose to Order. As the Bill was on the Paper for second reading, he objected to its being passed over without any Notice of its postponement having been given to its promoters.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, that he had examined the Bill, and thinking that it was one which should not pass without further consideration he had thought it well to defer the second reading.

THE EARL OF LEITRIM said, he thought the question as to whether or not the Bill was one which should not be read a second time was for the judgment of their Lordships. The measure had been before the noble Earl the Earl of Redesdale), and the noble Earl had admitted in the most candid manner that he believed the Bill was promoted by Trinity College. He did not think that a greater compliment could be paid to the promoters of a Bill than to say that it was one framed by the Corporation at which it might be supposed to strike. This matter had been brought under the notice of Parliament on previous occasions, four years ago and last year; and the promoters were told that a Royal Commission would not be granted to inquire into the subject, but that some other means of ventilating it would be taken.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) pointed out that the measure—which, it was true, he had at first supposed to be promoted by Trinity College—proposed to make alterations in the law between landlord and tenant in behalf of some tenants of Trinity College. It would, in its present form, open the doors to the introduction of most dangerous interference with the public law by private legislation. Time, he thought, should be taken for further consideration before reading the Bill a second time.

THE EARL OF LEITRIM contended that the faults the Chairman of Committees conceived to exist in the Bill were questions for consideration in Committee. The Bill had been promoted because an inquiry by that House, whether by a Royal Commission or a Select Committee, had been refused on more than one occasion. They now sought to get the subject of the Bill inquired into with a view to legislation, or to have it shown to them that they had no case for legislation. They had no option but to endeavour to obtain what they desired by promoting this Bill. He was afraid that the action taken that afternoon was a gagging process, resulting from Trinity College getting hold of his noble Friend the Chairman of Committees. The Chairman of Committees had reported in favour of this Bill.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES): No, no!

THE EARL OF LEITRIM said, that Trinity College had pushed matters to an extreme, and there was such a thing even as an Irish tenant becoming exasperated. They had been agitating this matter for four years, and it was now for their Lordships to terminate a very unseemly wrangle between Trinity College and its tenants. Trinity College had divisions in its own camp. Only recently a tenant had gone before the Board, and the majority had agreed to reduce the rents. The Provost, however, had put his veto on the matter, and

stopped the reduction. He did not wish to weary their Lordships with these details; but if they did not come before a Committee of the House how were they to be settled? He would move that the Bill be read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°."—(*The Earl of Leitrim.*)

Lord FITZGERALD said, he thought it would be well to postpone the second reading, so as to see whether that which was objectionable in the Bill could not be removed.

The Earl of LEITRIM: I will agree to that course.

Motion by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

Second Reading *postponed* till *Thursday* next.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

The Marquess of LOTHIAN rose, in pursuance of Notice, to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether the Government have in their possession any accurate survey of the proposed line of railway from Suakin to Berber; whether there is any contract with the constructors of the said proposed railway; and, if so, whether they would lay such contract upon the Table of the House; whether the Government have reason to believe that it will be possible to complete the said line of railway before the autumn; and if there be no reasonable prospect of the line being so completed, what steps the Government propose to take in order to secure the efficiency and safety of the forces now under the command of General Lord Wolseley in the Soudan; also to ask whether the Government had information of the report that Lord Wolseley had publicly announced his intention to advance on and to take Khartoum? The noble Lord said, that, in putting these Questions, he had no idea of doing anything which would embarrass the Government, or be disadvantageous to the public interests. What he wanted to know by his first Question was, whether Her Majesty's Government had any survey of sufficient accuracy to enable them to tell the House whether by any reasonable means the railway could be completed in time to relieve the Forces now acting under Lord Wolseley? It was clear, for two reasons, that Her Majesty's Government must be in possession of a considerable amount of information as to the line over which it was proposed to take the railway. The first was that, for a long time past, they had been publicly and privately warned that, in the event of any misfortune happening to Lord Wolseley's Force, it would be absolutely necessary to open the Suakin-Berber route; and he could not but think, therefore that they had obtained every possible information as to the practicability of that route; and, secondly, because when the question was before the Government as to which route should be taken by the Relief Force under Lord Wolseley, it was not possible to believe that they had come to a decision without definite and reliable knowledge as to both routes. His second Question, as to the existence of a contract for the railway in question, had been answered in "another place," and the Secretary of State for War had promised to lay it on the Table. Probably the noble Earl would also consent to lay it on the Table of their Lordships' House. He should be glad if the noble Earl would now state the terms of the contract, and whether the contractors were bound to make the railway as a whole? What he wished to say to the Government as to the construction of this railway was this. Are you in earnest? He did not ask impossibilities of the Government; but, if possible, were the Government determined to carry the railway through to Berber, or would they only make a beginning, go, perhaps, as far as Sinkat, and then wait to see what would happen next? Under ordinary circumstances he might have scarcely felt justified in asking them such a Question; but all that was happening now had happened before—only a year ago. Last year, as now, there were soldiers and garrisons in the Soudan, whom we were bound to support and relieve, and besides many thousands of helpless women and children. Last year we sent out troops to crush Osman Digna, as we hope to crush him now. Last year, as now, we sent out plant for the construction of a railway; but the railway was begun, and nothing more came of it. History was repeating itself very fast. He was entitled to ask whether the Government were going to do

the same thing now? There was no result from the operations of last year except the shedding of much blood and the lavishing of treasure. The Government said that those battles saved Suakin; but would anybody in this country believe that Suakin would not have been safe except for the battles of Teb and Tamanieb? He would repeat, were the Government in earnest in making the railway from Suakin to Berber? With reference to the third Question, he hoped that the Government would say that it would be made in time to be of service to Lord Wolseley. He should like to know whether this railway would not take two years in construction; for Lord Wolseley himself stated that two years was the time this would be needed for the work. If that were so, it became a question why the railway was to be constructed, or if it should be constructed at all. The matter was of great consequence, because of the position which it seemed intended that Lord Wolseley's Forces should occupy during the hot months. He spoke as one who had had experience of such climates, and he knew how depressing and dangerous enforced inactivity was. He, moreover, was at a loss to know how Lord Wolseley was to get supplies, and how reliefs were to be sent if it became necessary, if the railway were not completed by the autumn. What he wanted to know was, whether the Government had any other string to their bow? He asked the Government to give one some hope—some certainty—that this country would be in a position to relieve Lord Wolseley's Force if necessary. He felt sure that the noble Earl would do both the Government and the country a great service if he would let them know for certain what the Government intended to do. As to the last portion of his Question, as to Lord Wolseley's announcement, he would ask further, if the Government had received this information, whether it was their intention to abide by it? He had himself lived among Orientals, and he knew well that if there was one thing more disastrous than another it was to say anything which they were not prepared to carry out. Were the Government prepared to carry out this intention? He would be very sorry to put any limit to what could be done by British troops under any circumstances, and no doubt it was possible to go to Khartoum and take it; but what would be the advantage of that alone? Her Majesty's Government had announced their intention of destroying the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. As a Member of their Lordships' House, he entered his protest against this policy of going to Khartoum with the avowed object of retiring from it. There was no more fatal policy than this—to fight, and, though victorious, to act as if the battle had been lost. If they went to Khartoum they must stay there; but the Government had no such intention; they proposed to fight their way there through a sea of blood, with no other intention or object than to wade out again, with this additional evil result—that those Arabs, who might have been our friends, would, and must, become our deadly and implacable enemies. He did not wish to criticize the conduct of the Expedition in any way; but he could not help thinking that General Brackenbury had made a mistake in destroying the villages up the Nile, instead of doing all in his power to conciliate the Arabs of the districts through which he passed. Berber, which was the key of the whole position, should be made the military centre of the Soudan; and under a Government such as might be instituted either by, or under the authority of England, it would now become a centre of civilization and commerce. That was, supposing always that it were possible to construct the railway from Suakin. If the Mahdi were determined to continue his hostile attitude and to drive us out of Egypt, we should be infinitely better able to check and defeat him should he advance to attack us at Berber, thereby following him into his own wild and desert country. The last words from General Gordon were striking and characteristic, and he would recommend them to the consideration of Her Majesty's Government. In answer to a message from the Mahdi that Colonel Stewart was killed, and that he had full information as to the state of Khartoum, General Gordon said—"I do not care what you know or what you do. I am made of iron. I shall stop here." If the Government would only act on such a principle, give the country the information they desired, and to which they were entitled, and, having fixed upon a definite policy, stand firmly by it, he

The Marquess of Lothian

felt sure that they would have the approval and support of the country. He asked the noble Earl for a reply to the Question of which he had given Notice.

The Earl of MORLEY said, that he entirely acquitted the noble Marquess opposite of any intention to impede the military operations by putting this Question on the Paper. But he thought the noble Marquess had travelled a little beyond the confines of the Question. During the course of the noble Marquess's speech, he had more than once been tempted to regret that he had not had an opportunity on a former occasion of hearing the noble Marquess. He trusted, however, that their Lordships would excuse him if he abstained from following his noble Friend into the somewhat extraneous matter contained in his speech. As to the Question on the Paper, they had no actual survey for the construction of the Suakin-Berber line; but they had endeavoured to collect all the information that was available both in Egypt and in this country; and he believed that they had acquired sufficient information to enable them to state that there would be no insuperable difficulties in its construction. There might be one or two points of difficulty in connection with the engineering of it; but he did not believe that these were such as could not be overcome. With regard to the second point, there was no contract with the constructors of the proposed railway; but there was an arrangement made with them by which they were to act as agents of the Government. The Government proposed to lay the document which embodied the terms of this arrangement before their Lordships; and it would not be wise or prudent, meanwhile, to enter into a detailed statement of what those terms were. As to the third point, the period when the line was likely to be finished, he should be extremely glad to give an answer if he could; but, as their Lordships must be aware, its construction depended upon military as well as engineering considerations. They trusted that the military difficulties would be overcome without any long delay; but it would be extremely hazardous to venture upon any forecast on that point. Those difficulties overcome, they were assured by the constructors that there would be no difficulty in constructing it, or at least a great part of it, by the time autumn set in, in a form which would be sufficient for military purposes. There might be difficulties which they could not foresee, which might impede their progress with the line; but as far as they were aware, and as their information led them to believe, the railway would, if not completed, be made for a considerable way by the autumn, and the making of even a portion of it would be of great assistance in any movement of troops or stores that might be necessary. As to the steps which the Government proposed to take for securing the efficiency and safety of the Forces under Lord Wolseley, it seemed to him that the noble Marquess had been a little confusing two things in his own mind. The question of the actual relief and security of the Forces under Lord Wolseley at present in the Soudan could not be affected, in the slightest degree, by any considerations connected with the making of that line. It would be quite as difficult to convey stores and supplies from Suakin as from Wady Halfa. With regard to the supplies for Lord Wolseley's troops in the Soudan, which were above the Cataracts, between the first and second series, these troops were at present being supplied from Egyptian sources entirely, while large supplies were being sent out from home. Although there were difficulties on the line of communication and transport, all he could say was that every effort had been made locally and at home to facilitate the communications with Lord Wolseley's troops, and to provide them with all necessary supplies of stores, clothing, and food, and everything else that they required. He could assure the noble Lord, if it was necessary to assure him, that every effort was being made locally to provide for the needs of the troops, and that there was no reason to suppose at present that those efforts would not be sufficient and effective. With regard to the last Question put by the noble Marquess, he could only give the simple answer that they had no information whatever as to the announcement which Lord Wolseley was reported to have made at Korti of his intention to advance on and to take Khartoum at once.

Viscount BURY said, he thought that their Lordships could not but take into consideration the tone in which the

Government had always hitherto treated that question, and that they must examine rather critically such a statement as that which had been just made by the Under Secretary for War. The House was in very great doubt as to what the policy of Her Majesty's Government really was. The whole of the debate which took place the other night failed to elicit from them any distinct expression of opinion; and all that could be discovered was that noble Lords on the Treasury Bench did not agree among themselves as to what the real object of the war was. The noble Lord at the head of the Admiralty entirely differed from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack; and their Colleagues in the other House differed from both of them. Some Members of the Government said they were going to Khartoum, and then immediately to leave, and some said they were to establish a stable Government at Khartoum. Towards the end of the debate it seemed that the Government had wished to convey the impression that they were going to establish some sort of a Government in the Soudan before they left. But what had happened since? He did not wonder that the noble Lord opposite was rather annoyed at the noble Marquess who had put the Question to-night having travelled somewhat far afield. He supposed that noble Lords on the Treasury Bench thought that, the Vote of Censure once fairly over, their Lordships were not to recur to the subject, but were to take the goods the gods provided them, and say nothing. They could not but remember that when the Motion was coming on a state of feverish anxiety to do something strong and positive animated noble Lords on the other side. They sent out that Expedition of our choicest troops which was now on the sea to Suakin, and complete plans for a railway from Suakin to Berber accompanied them. But now it seemed that the cold fit had succeeded to the hot fit, and the noble Lord the Under Secretary for War would not positively state that the railway was to be made. The noble Lord had said, as had been said on several occasions, that a railway could be made; but their Lordships did not know that a railway could be made, although that was the Question which was put by the noble Marquess, and which was not answered by the noble Lord the Under Secretary. If anything like a stable Government was to be established in the Soudan, was it not somewhat extraordinary that the troops that were on the march to Abu Hamad, and going to Berber, should have been ordered away from the forward position they occupied; and if the Expedition to Suakin was to proceed to Berber by railway, there was no co-operation now in contemplation between Lord Wolseley's Forces on the Nile and such an Expedition? Since the Expedition had started from Suakin, a concentration of our troops was taking place on the Nile near Korti, and not in the direction of Berber. The Expedition which left our shores the other day would be enormously costly, not only in money, but in the lives of our best soldiers; and therefore their Lordships had a right to receive some definite expression of the intention of the Government.

Lord ELLENBOROUGH observed, that their Lordships were not called upon to give an opinion on military matters now; but he wished to say, on his own behalf—what he was sure would be corroborated by General Officers of great experience—that the health of the Army was likely to suffer more from inactivity than in advancing even under the most difficult circumstances. He pointed out, also, that a retreat, under whatever conditions, must always have a powerful moral effect upon an Oriental population, as well as upon the spirits of our own troops, and he thought no retreat should be made, unless it were obviously necessary. In reference to the allusion made to Brigadier General Brackenbury, he (Lord Ellenborough) felt bound to say that that officer was free from any kind of blame; and if any blame could be attributed, it was to the General Officer who placed the Force in its position previously, and had the Brigadier advanced, or hesitated for the moment to retreat, he would have had the sympathy, one and all, of his fellow-countrymen.

Earl STANHOPE said, he thought they were entitled to demand some fuller explanation. He had heard on good authority that the officer commanding at Suakin ascertained a short time ago that Osman Digna's Forces were nearly starved out, and that he had applied to the Home Authorities for more men to enable him to take advantage of

the opportunity thus afforded for dealing a decisive blow at Osman Digna. That request was, however, refused. The time for doing it had now gone by, and Osman's Force had increased, and he had regained his power. If the Government would only put forward a clear and definite statement of what they intended to do, he felt sure they would receive the unanimous support of that House and of the country; while he was equally convinced that it would strengthen Lord Wolseley's position if the Government would state that they were determined to establish a firm Government at Khartoum or at Berber.

The Earl of GALLOWAY said, he had understood, from the answer given by the noble Lord the Under Secretary for War, that it was the intention of the Government to try to construct a railway running the whole way from Suakin to Berber, and that they had every hope that there would be no engineering difficulty that would prevent that from being done. He had been a little disappointed at hearing from the noble Lord that no contract had been entered into for laying down that line, although the noble Lord had added that there had been an arrangement made, and that its terms would be laid before their Lordships in a short time. The House could, no doubt, discuss the matter more conveniently when they had the terms of that arrangement in their hands; and he would, therefore, now ask the noble Lord how soon they were likely to be laid on the Table?

The Earl of MORLEY said, he could not name the day; but the arrangement would be placed on the Table at an early a date as possible.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: I trust that the noble Lord will not allow any unnecessary delay to occur in producing the arrangement, because a good deal of anxiety prevails on this subject; and such documentary evidence would be very grateful to the public mind, to show it what is going on. I confess that this matter has to me rather an *Arabian Nights* air about it. We used always to be taught that one of the greatest triumphs of Roman courage was the case of the man who bought land that was at the time occupied by Hannibal's Army. He would be a bolder man still who pledged himself to build a railway on land that was occupied by a hostile Army. But that is not the whole extent of boldness shown by Her Majesty's Government. They have not only pledged themselves, as I understand, to make a railway in the teeth of a hostile Army, but to make it on land of which they have not anything approaching to a survey. The idea of making a promise to make a railway merely on what I may call hearsay—on what this or that traveller has told you he has observed in the country—is, I venture to say, an entirely new achievement in the course of railway construction, and would alarm very much my noble Friend the Chairman of the Great Northern Railway, and some of the most distinguished railway authorities in this country; and I think it is a matter of common notoriety that one of the greatest authorities has expressed very considerable doubt of the possibility of making a railway in the proposed time. I wish to have some test that it is really a *bonâ fide* railway that is contemplated, whether the Government have taken any measures to supply materials, and how far they have taken those measures. It is a railway of 280 miles, and if there are no bridges on this railway it is the most singular railway in the world.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: There are no bridges.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: None whatever?

The Earl of KIMBERLEY: There are no rivers to be crossed.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: Well, it is a difficult and mountainous country, and there must be gullies that will have to be crossed by means of bridges. Iron girders must, at all events, be made to order; and I want to know what orders have been given in that respect, and whether there is anything in the nature of a specification? Then as to the time. The time which is mentioned for construction is certainly very striking to those who have paid any attention to railway business. I suppose that what the noble Lord euphemistically called the military difficulties will not be removed before the end of this month. Before the autumn comes—say the 1st of October—there will be but five months to make 280 miles; and to do this is something like two miles a-day, and this, too, in an enemy's country. I believe that to

make a railway, even at the rate of one mile a-day, where an accurate survey has been made, and where beforehand every kind of railway material has been provided, where the country is in perfect peace, and the best organization is at command, is a very considerable achievement. I think it was done by Sir Richard Temple in the case of the Dacken Railway, and everybody was much surprised at it; but when the Government undertake to make a railway in an enemy's country without any survey, when, apparently, they have not ordered a single bit of railway plant beforehand —when they undertake to make this railway at the rate of two miles a-day, it really suggests that the Government have somehow or other found Aladdin's lamp, and that they intend to make use of it. It is impossible, considering the past history of this question, and considering what the influence of Parliamentary events has been upon our military preparations, not to feel some anxiety for more abundant information, that shall assure us that the intention to make those 280 miles before the autumn is serious, and that some adequate preparation for so gigantic a task is being made. I wish to press upon the noble Lord that, if he cannot give this information to-morrow, he will give us it without delay, and that he will let us have the contract, or something in the nature of a specification, to assure us that we are dealing with a serious matter.

EARL GRANVILLE: The remarks of the noble Marquess are somewhat discouraging. Her Majesty's Government have been frequently urged to make this railway, and the moment they undertake it the noble Marquess comes forward to represent the enormous difficulty of accomplishing the undertaking.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Of doing it in the time.

EARL GRANVILLE: I am unable to speak from technical knowledge. The noble Marquess has far greater knowledge of railways than I have. The noble Viscount sitting near the noble Marquess speaks of this railway as if it were a perfect myth, as if no preparations had been made, as if no plant was ready, and as if it were a matter of extraordinary chance that one of the most eminent firms of contractors in the country would be able to carry out the work. But the fact is that all the plant was perfectly ready when the arrangements were made. The noble Marquess does not expect that it is to be made like the Great Northern Railway. It is to be what is called a contractor's railway, its primary object being of a military character; but it may be used in order to be converted into a permanent railway. It will, however, be much more easily managed, and will be constructed much faster than the substantial and expensive railways to which the noble Marquess has referred.

LORD NAPIER OF MAGDALA: I believe it will be convenient to your Lordships if I explain that the railway, for military purposes, may be of a very temporary character, which could be rapidly constructed. In the invasion of a hostile country, where animal transport is deficient, it is necessary to supplement it by a railway, however temporary, as soon as the advanced posts are sufficiently established. Such a railway will greatly facilitate a more permanent structure, if such should be desired. I have had much communication with engineers connected with railways in Egypt and other Eastern countries, who were quite confident of the possibility of making the railway from Suakin to Berber without any extraordinary difficulty. They are men of experience in the construction of railways in Eastern countries, and their judgment may be relied upon. Another point which I consider it desirable to advert to is an opinion expressed in the Press and elsewhere of the desirability of entering into negotiations with the Mahdi. From first to last, the Mahdi has not shown the least disposition to treat with anyone. General Gordon's overture was met with the message—

> "Put on my uniform, also become a Mussulman, and I will spare you; otherwise I will sweep you off the face of the earth."

I think that evinced the spirit of an irreconcilable fanatic, and as such he ought to be treated. To talk of negotiating with such a man was absurd. We had either to beat him or let him alone; and I hope we shall beat him.

SOUTH AFRICA (EAST COAST)—ST. LUCIA BAY.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether St. Lucia Bay is British terri-

tory, and whether he can state what extent of the coast to the north of Natal is under British protection? The noble Earl said, he did not wish to discuss the Colonial policy of the Government; but as there had been so much misunderstanding on the subject, he thought it would be a great relief to have some information on the point.

THE EARL OF DERBY: I have to say that St. Lucia Bay was ceded to the British Crown a little more than 40 years ago by Panda, the then King of Zululand, who undoubtedly exercised Sovereign powers over the territory in question. No steps were taken at the time in consequence of that cession, and nothing has been done in the long interval which has occurred until the close of last year, when it seemed to us desirable to re-assert or keep alive what was assumed to be our right to the ceded territory by hoisting the British Flag. It was not a new annexation, but simply intended to remind those whom it might concern that we had rights over that coast which were undoubtedly ours, and which we had never given up. The flag was accordingly hoisted, and it remains there. I do not think it would be quite fair to the House if I did not add that we have received communications from the German Government expressing unwillingness to recognize the validity of our title upon various grounds, one of which was the long time during which the claim has lain in abeyance. The matter is still under discussion between the two Governments; and while that is the case I cannot, in the interest of the Public Service, give any further details. With regard to the latter part of the Question, I have already stated what is the present position in regard to St. Lucia Bay; but as to the rest of the coast to the north of Natal, that part only which forms part of the Reserve is under British protection.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: I do not propose to comment on the rather serious statement which my noble Friend has made with regard to the intervention of foreign policy or difference in this question; but I wish to clear up one point which seems to me of very great consequence, and which arises out of the last words which he used with regard to Natal. I understand from my noble Friend that the state of the case is this—that we have asserted, or that we have re-asserted, a Sovereignty to St. Lucia Bay; but the territory at the back of St. Lucia Bay is Zululand. At the time when I had the honour of holding the Seals of Office Zululand was not English territory. I should like to understand this distinctly, assuming our claim to St. Lucia Bay is made, whether or not we have a continuous territory from the interior down to St. Lucia Bay, or whether, as I rather gather from the reply of the noble Earl, there is an intervening tract of land at the back of St. Lucia Bay cutting St. Lucia Bay off from the rest of our Possessions in South Africa? That is an extremely important Question, for the absence of this continuity of territory may give rise, and possibly will give rise, to serious complications hereafter.

THE EARL OF DERBY: Behind St. Lucia Bay and that part of the coast that belongs to Zululand, to the southward, is the Reserve, and over that we have assumed protection. What our claim to St. Lucia Bay is I have already stated; but the territory immediately behind that is the territory of Zululand, not forming part of the Reserve.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: I understand, then, that our territories are continuous from the Reserve down to the sea coast.

THE EARL OF DERBY: No; I understand the noble Earl to ask me with regard to the territory, not on the sea coast, but at the back, and I answered accordingly. That has not been ceded to England, and we have no other rights over it than over the whole of Zululand.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH said, he hoped that the Government would fully realize the value of St. Lucia Bay. The claim of England to that Bay was laid down many years ago, and though it had fallen into abeyance that was no reason why it should be abandoned.

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 5th March, 1885.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—John Kenelm Digby Wingfield Digby, esquire, *for* Somerset County (Mid-Division).

SELECT COMMITTEE—Telephone and Telegraph Wires, *appointed* and *nominated.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—NAVY (SUPPLEMENTARY); CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1884-5)—CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE; CLASS IV. — EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—High Court of Justice (Provincial Sittings) * [82]: Trustees Relief * [83]; Copyright (Works of Fine Art) * [84].

Committee—Municipal Voters (Relief) [64]—R.P.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

CORPORATION OF LONDON TOWER BRIDGE BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

MR. THOROLD ROGERS said, he had given Notice of his intention to move the rejection of the Bill; but he proposed to withdraw that Motion in favour of that of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets Mr. Ritchie to refer the Bill to a Select Committee. He had a Petition to present against the Bill from the working men of London, who feared that the measure would diminish the quantity of shipping near London Bridge, and thereby cause a diminution of employment. He was fully prepared to admit—and he admired—the public spirit and generosity of the Corporation in the matter. They were undertaking to construct this bridge at their own expense; but he was afraid that it might be found necessary to pay a large amount of compensation to wharfingers and others, and that the traffic might be seriously impeded.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *committed* to a Select Committee, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill, presented not later than three clear days before the sitting of the Committee, be referred to the Committee; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, Agents, or Witnesses, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

POLICE AND SANITARY REGULATIONS.

APPOINTMENT OF A COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Committee of Selection do appoint a Committee not exceeding Seven Members, to whom shall be referred all Private Bills promoted by Municipal and other Local Authorities by which it is proposed to create powers relating to Police or Sanitary Regulations which deviate from, or are in extension of, or repugnant to, the general Law."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

MR. SEXTON said, he objected to the Motion, on the ground that it contained proposals of a novel character, and carried the principle of delegation too far. It was proposed that the Committee of Selection should usurp the functions of the House, which would lose all efficient control over its own Committees. He begged to move the adjournment of the debate, in order to afford time for the House to consider the question and deal with it.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, the hon. Member was not correct in stating that the proposals contained in the Resolution were of a novel character. A similar Committee was appointed last year in precisely the same manner. Nor was there any delegation in the matter whatever. Some difficulty arose a year or two ago, in consequence of Bills which contained provisions imposing police and sanitary regulations, at variance with the general law, being referred to different Committees. Great inconvenience was occasioned, owing to the

different decisions that were arrived at —for instance, annuities were allowed in one case to be spread over 40 years, and others over 50 years; and, in one case for so long a period as 100 years. It was most desirable that some uniform mode of dealing with the provisions of such Bills should be adopted, and that these applications to Parliament for special powers should not be varied in different cases. A Committee was appointed, which was presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth), who prepared a careful Report, which was discussed in the House, and a general approval given to it. Last year a Committee was again appointed, which was presided over by his hon. Friend the junior Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot), also with the full approval of the House. It was proposed this year that a similar Committee should be appointed to consider all the Private Bills promoted by Municipal and other Authorities containing provisions relating to police or sanitary regulations which were at variance with the general law, and more especially in reference to the financial position of the towns by which such Bills were promoted.

MR. SEXTON asked who the Committee were last year?

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, that, if he recollected rightly, it consisted of his hon. Friend the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot), the hon. Member for Chippenham (Sir Gabriel Goldney), the hon. Member for Perth (Mr. C. S. Parker), the hon. Member for East Worcestershire (Mr. Hastings), the hon. Member for South Devon (Mr. Carpenter Garnier), the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. West), himself, and one or two other Members whose names he could not recollect at the moment. Most of the Members of the Committee last year had sat upon the previous Committee in 1883. The general principle which guided the decisions of the Committee was that there should be some kind of uniformity adopted in regard to Bills of this character. It was certainly most undesirable to have one law in Liverpool, another in Manchester, and another in Leeds. The object of the appointment of the Committee was to prevent, as far as possible, Corporations and other public Bodies from coming to Parliament and obtaining powers which deviated from, or were in extension of, the general law. The provisions of every Bill were carefully considered, and every proposition of that nature was rigidly excluded from the measure. He did not think that any advantage would be derived from an adjournment of the debate, and he hoped the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) would not press the Motion. He was not aware that there were many Irish Bills promoted this year which would be brought under the cognizance of the Committee. There were none in the two previous years; and he admitted that if there were Bills from Ireland which would go before the Committee, it would be desirable to have the services of some Irish Members upon it.

MR. DAWSON said, he took it that his hon. Friend's objection was principally to the proposition that an important Committee should be appointed by another Committee, and that, however desirable it might be to nominate the Committee, it ought to be appointed by the House. The Committee might have done its duty very well in the past; but to provide that it should be appointed by the Committee of Selection was to delegate to the Committee of Selection, chosen by themselves, a duty which ought to be discharged by the House. If the seven Members of the Committee did their duty so well, and were so competent to discharge the important functions intrusted to them, why not appoint them directly by the House, and come down with a recommendation to the House to appoint a Committee of seven Members for that express purpose? The proposal made by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary for the Home Department (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was a usurpation of the distinct functions of the House, and amounted not to the regular appointment of a Committee, but to the appointment of a Sub-Committee by an existing Committee. His own opinion was that that was a breach of the Privileges of the House, and that it ought not to be carried further. He should have thought that the hon. Member the Under Secretary of State would have been one of the last men in the House to give his countenance to such a proposition. It must be clearly understood that those who were in favour of adjourning the debate

had no desire to impugn the importance of the duties to be discharged by the Committee. They did not impugn the disinterested character of the motives by which the Committee would be actuated, nor did they intend to imply that the tribunal would be otherwise than impartial; but their contention was that the House itself had certain duties to discharge, and that they were not justified in delegating those duties to the Committee of Selection.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY said, he had great pleasure in supporting the protest made by his hon. Friends in this matter. He was of opinion that the delegation, in important matters of this kind, of the functions of the House to the Committee of Selection involved a very serious principle. There had been two previous Committees of this kind appointed, and he understood that the name of no Irish Member had appeared on either of them. It must be remembered that, in the case of a Committee of this nature, its decisions were practically final; because, whatever decision was laid down by such a tribunal, it was always accepted by the House. Important Irish Private Business might be within the scope of this arrangement, and the Irish people might find themselves placed at a disadvantage by the adoption of this system. The fact that for two previous years the plan had worked fairly well was hardly a sufficient justification for the continuance of the arrangement. He earnestly hoped that his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) would persist in his Motion for the adjournment of the debate.

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, that, as Chairman of the Committee of last year, he was anxious to say a word in support of the observations of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. H. H. Fowler). First of all, in regard to Ireland. As a matter of fact, only a single Irish Bill came before the Committee last year, and all the Bills taken into consideration by the Committee were Bills which contained provisions in excess of the general law, and which proposed to take powers which, in the opinion of a large majority of the House, ought not, without grave consideration, to be given to any Municipal Body. Perhaps the House would allow him to quote from a Report of the Select Committee adopted at the last of a series of sittings last year. These were the principles the Committee laid down—

"They have in every case amended the Bills, endeavouring to the best of their ability to limit the large powers sought by the Corporations and other Local Authorities upon two main principles, which they believe to be accepted by the House—namely, first, that no local powers should be given which are in excess of the general law, unless strong local reasons exist for such powers; and, secondly, that no statutory enactments should be permitted for purposes which can be effected by bye-laws."

Those were the two principles laid down by the Committee, and upon those two principles they endeavoured to regulate all the Bills which came before them, and, he believed, to the satisfaction, if not of the promoters of the Bills themselves, at least of all those who took a reasonable interest in the matter. It was said that it was an unconstitutional proceeding for the House to delegate to the Committee of Selection the right of appointing a Committee for dealing with a number of Private Bills. Now, he failed to see any difference between appointing a Committee to deal with a single Bill and appointing a Committee to deal with a number of Bills. It must be borne in mind that the Bills referred to the Committee were all of the same character, and that they related to regulations in regard to police and sanitary matters. It was a special Committee to take into consideration a certain number of very important Bills, to which it was their duty to devote most careful consideration. They did not at all slur the work over, and he thought they sat as many as 30 times last Session, coming in each case to a deliberate conclusion. No doubt, the Committee was appointed by the Committee of Selection; but, as hon. Members well knew, the House of Commons itself appointed the Committee of Selection, and gave them certain powers in regard to the appointment of other Committees.

MR. SPEAKER: I must remind the hon. Member that the Question now before the House is the question of the adjournment of the debate, and he would not be in Order in discussing the Main Question.

MR. J. G. TALBOT said, he was sorry for having transgressed. He would only add that he trusted the matter would not be adjourned, because it was of the utmost importance to come to a conclu-

sion upon it as rapidly as possible. He should be quite prepared, when the question came up again, to state his reasons for supporting the Motion of the hon. Gentleman opposite the Under Secretary of State (Mr. H. H. Fowler).

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, the great object his hon. Friends had in view was to prevent what they considered to be a breach of the Privileges of the House. No doubt, a precedent had been established in other years; but the contention of himself and his hon. Friends was that those precedents constituted no valid reason whatever why the House should not, on this third occasion, take exception to the course which had been pursued. The Committee of Selection was constituted for the purpose of nominating the Members of Private Bill Committees; but he did not believe that, save and except by an Order of the House in regard to a Hybrid Committee, the power had ever been given to them to select at their own discretion a Committee to whom was intrusted the duty of dealing with an important class of Private Bills. Hitherto, he believed, their duties had been confined to the selection of Private Bill Committees, and they had never gone beyond that duty. The proposal of the Government, if adopted on the present occasion, would establish what would be analogous to an *Imperium in Imperio.* They would, at their own instance, have the power of constituting a new Body, with very large powers of interference with the provisions of important Private Bills. No doubt, it was the duty of the House to watch very closely every attempt made by a Corporation to secure the passing of special laws by Parliament for itself, and great vigilance ought to be exercised in order to see that there was no interference with the general law, unless some very good cause should be shown for it. But it appeared to him that the Committee of Selection were now seeking to do, in a great measure, what the House complained of in regard to these Municipal Corporations, because the proposal was to give them exceptional powers, which might involve an arbitrary interference with the ordinary legislation of the House, so far as it affected Private Bills. He supported the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, because he thought that the Government were bound to show a better case than had yet been put forward for continuing a precedent which might involve very serious consequences. In the absence of explanation the adjournment of the debate was quite justified; and he hoped the hon. Gentleman opposite would not resist the Motion.

MR. LEAMY said, he did not think that the adjournment of the debate would entail any inconvenience upon the persons who were engaged in the promotion of these Private Bills. In the event of the Resolution moved by the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department not being carried for the next three or four days no kind of difficulty would arise; and there was, therefore, no reason in the world why the hon. Gentleman should not consent to the adjournment. Of course, the question was one in which not only the Irish Members, but every other Member of the House was interested; and all they wanted was that a fair opportunity should be given for discussing a change which they believed to be one of very great importance. What harm would be done if two or three days were allowed to elapse before the House passed this Resolution? Under all the circumstances of the case, he thought the best course was to adjourn the debate.

MR. HEALY said, he hoped that the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. H. H. Fowler) would not inaugurate his new Office by coming into unnecessary conflict with a large body of the Irish people. He thought the Irish people were indebted to his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) for the way in which he had watched these matters. His hon. Friend had already succeeded in obtaining large concessions with regard to other Committees. It was now proposed to rush this Resolution through the House, in order to defeat the intentions of his hon. Friend in another respect, and to prevent him from securing upon this particular Committee the appointment of an Irish Representative who would watch over the interests of the Irish people. He did not see why, in regard to this secondary Committee, the concession which his hon. Friend had already obtained in regard to the Committee of Selection itself should not be made. The noble Lord the Member for Flint (Lord

Richard Grosvenor), who had just entered the House, was responsible for the manner in which these Committees were nominated; and he would remind the noble Lord that the Motion they were now discussing appeared for the first time on the Paper that day. The debate, therefore, ought to be adjourned at once, if it were only for the purpose of giving the Government time to consider the proposals now made to them. He must say that it was a monstrously unfair thing that Motions of this kind should be sprung upon the House before hon. Members could have had the slightest opportunity of considering them. There was a general rule, which prevented the discussion of any Business of which due Notice had not been given upon the Paper; and whenever an objection was raised to a Private Bill itself it was necessary that the Bill should be put down, and due Notice given, so that a day might be fixed for the discussion of it. But what was the course pursued in this case? At the time of Private Business, at a quarter before 4, when hon. Members were not prepared for contentious matter, a Motion, involving very important interests, and placed on the Paper for the first time, was attempted to be rushed through the House, contrary to all the recognized Rules. He therefore trusted that, under these circumstances, the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State would now recognize that a case had been made out at least for the adjournment of the debate, so that he and the Government might take time to consider the advisability of placing one Irish Member, at any rate, upon the Committee. Sooner or later, it behoved the House to put its foot upon this loose way of transacting Business. The Irish Members represented a large body of opinion in that House—a body of opinion that was bound to grow and increase—and the Government must, sooner or later, face the fact that the representation the Irish Members desired in regard to every branch of the Business of the House must be conceded. It was, therefore, desirable that the Representatives of the Government should act in a more diplomatic manner towards the Irish Members. The noble Lord the Member for Flint (Lord Richard Grosvenor) had had a large experience in dealing with these matters, and he hoped the noble Lord would be prepared to announce that the Government would consent to the adjournment of the debate, in order that they might have an opportunity of considering the representations now made to them. He would only point out to the Government that Irish Private Bills, of very great importance to the Irish people, must constantly come before this Committee. There was a Bill at the present moment, called the Rathmines Bill, which was of the utmost importance to the City of Dublin; and yet he believed that there would not be a single Irish Member upon the Committee who would have to deal with that Bill. It was most unfortunate that the Government should attempt to rush Business through the House in that way; and if they were not prepared to make the concession they were now asked for, he hoped they would, at least, consent to adjourn the debate, in order that the views of the Irish Members might be fully taken into consideration.

MR. DEASY, in supporting the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, said, it was important, even from the Government point of view, that the House should resist the Motion now made. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had not long filled that Office; and he thought the hon. Gentleman was commencing his official career very badly, in endeavouring to shut out Irish Members from serving on this Committee.

MR. H. H. FOWLER hoped that he might be allowed to explain. He was not proposing to exclude any Irish Member from serving on the Committee; but his proposal was simply that the Committee should be appointed by the Committee of Selection, upon which the Irish Members were already represented. It would be for the Committee of Selection to decide, one way or the other, what the composition of the Committee should be. Personally, he did not propose, in any way, to exclude the Irish Members.

MR. DEASY said, that the proposal of the hon. Member was that the Committee should be nominated by a Committee that was already formed, and which was composed of nine Members, of whom only one Irish Member would have the right of assisting in the nomination of this Committee of seven. Judging from the performances of the

Government in regard to Irish measures generally, he thought the Representatives of that country were justified in coming to the conclusion that the one Irish Member of the Committee of Selection would have very little power of nominating and securing a fair Irish representation upon the Committee. He would further point out that the hour at which this proposal was brought on was an hour at which hon. Members were very seldom in their places; and as the Motion had only appeared on the Paper that day, it must be fairly concluded that many persons who took a deep interest in the question could not have seen it at all, or otherwise they would have been in their places to support the remonstrances of the Irish Members. He did not think that a more reasonable proposition could be made than that which had been put forward by his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). His hon. Friend merely asked that the House should not be forced into a decision on the question that evening, but should be allowed a couple of days to consider it. At the end of a couple of days, it was possible that it would not be necessary to offer any opposition to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman. The appointment of this Committee affected questions which concerned the Irish people very deeply, from the fact that questions dealing with police and sanitary regulations would have to come before it. It was, therefore, of the utmost importance that the Irish Members should be fairly represented upon the Committee. Judging from the action of Her Majesty's Government lately in regard to Irish Members, there would be no desire on their part to make proper provision for Irish representation; and, therefore, in order that the whole matter might be properly considered, he trusted that the Government would offer no further opposition to the action of the Irish Members, but that they would consent to the adjournment of the debate.

MR. KENNY said, he thought it would be generally conceded that the action of the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. H. H. Fowler) was somewhat extraordinary. He had come down to the House that day with a Motion which was likely to escape the attention of everyone whose attention was not specially drawn to it, and he had moved it without a word of explanation. One thing was quite certain—that it would not only be advantageous to the House, but that it was extremely desirable that the hon. Gentleman should explain the object with which he had made the Motion. He had said already that he was not prepared to exclude the Irish Members from sitting on the Committee. That was all very well; but the effect of passing the Motion would be to place important measures connected with local legislation in Ireland in the hands of Members who could have no possible interest in, or knowledge of, the country. He, therefore, felt that it was essential the hon. Gentleman should explain the precise scope and object of his proposition; and the request made by his hon. Friends the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) and the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), that he would postpone the Resolution until Monday, was only fair and reasonable. Was this intended to be a compromise in connection with the Bill affecting Private Bill legislation which was recently brought under the notice of the House? If it was, it was a very clumsy mode of discussing the question. If there was any desire to facilitate the passing of private measures through the House, the best course would be to convince every section of the House that the interests intrusted to their charge were in no respect disregarded. He should certainly offer the most strenuous opposition in his power to the proposition of the Government.

MR. GRAY said, that, if his memory did not deceive him, at least one, if not two, important Irish Private Bills would have to go before the Committee this year. The hon. Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot) had mentioned that no Irish Bill was referred to the Committee last year, and he thought the hon. Member was correct; but he was under the impression that an exceedingly important Irish Bill, one that was promoted by the township of Rathmines, would come under the cognizance of this Committee if it was appointed. He also thought there was another measure promoted by the borough of Belfast; but of that he was not quite sure. He was certain, however, that there was a Bill introduced by the township of Rathmines, and that it contained provisions of a most important character which would require

the careful attention of the Committee. That being so, he thought that, as a matter of principle, they should press for the adjournment of the debate, so that arrangements might be made for nominating Irish Members upon the Committee, which would have to deal with measures in which their interests were so deeply involved. He objected altogether to this system of indirect representation sought to be established by the Motion. He had the greatest possible confidence in his hon. Friend the Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), who would be one of the nine Members of the Committee of Selection; but, notwithstanding that confidence, he did not think that his hon. Friend should be the only Irish Member to decide the matter. He also objected to inquiries of so important a character being conducted in a private room, where the proceedings were not reported. They could not have the same force as an inquiry conducted in the regular way. He trusted that this controversy would not be prolonged, but that the Government would consent to what, after all, was a fair and reasonable proposition—namely, that the Motion, having been placed on the Paper only that day, should be postponed for a few days, and not rushed through the House with unnecessary haste. Hon. Members well knew that the course now proposed to be taken by the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department was in entire contravention of the ordinary Rules which regulated the proceedings of the House.

SIR JOHN R. MOWBRAY said, he was most unwilling to take any part in the discussion; first of all, because the Committee of Selection, of which he was Chairman, had quite enough to do without having any extra duties imposed upon them. The Committee of Selection were perfectly ready to undertake any duties the House might intrust to to them; and he believed that they had hitherto discharged their duty to the satisfaction of the House. It certainly seemed to him that the Motion for the adjournment of the debate was most unreasonable; and as to the assertion that the Motion was brought on without Notice, he might say that his hon. Friend the Under Secretary for the Home Department (Mr. H. H. Fowler) had on Monday, three days ago, given Notice, at the usual time, that he would make this Motion, which was simply for the re-appointment of the Committee, which had now been appointed for several successive years. He had never heard any complaint of the action of that Committee, nor had the Members of it been accused of dealing unfairly with Irish Bills. Hon. Members who had taken part in the present discussion were most of them new Members of the House; and they might really not be aware that the Committee of Selection was one which had long been appointed to discharge certain important functions, among them being the nomination of Committees upon Private Bills. What was the ground of objection to the composition of that Committee in the present year? So far as he understood, it was that this year there was an Irish Bill, and that that Irish Bill would require particular attention on the part of the Irish Members. Then, what was the natural course to take? It was to secure that there should be some Irish Member upon the Committee of Selection who understood Irish questions. But the House must be aware that that wish on the part of the Irish Members had not been disregarded, and that this very year, at the instance of hon. Members below the Gangway, the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) had been added to the Committee of Selection in order to represent Ireland. There were, really, two Irish Members now upon the Committee—namely, the hon. and learned Member for Kildare (Mr. Meldon) and the hon. Member for Longford. Consequently, two out of the nine Members of the Committee, as now constituted, were Irish Members. If a debate of this kind was to be prolonged, and then to be adjourned for further discussion, what hope would there be of getting through the work of the House? He trusted that the House, by a large majority, would support the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State (Mr. H. H. Fowler).

MR. CALLAN said, that, with all due deference to the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken (Sir John R. Mowbray), it would have been in much better taste if he, as Chairman of the Committee of Selection, had allowed the House to exercise an unbiased judgment rather than have made an *ad misericordiam* ap-

peal to it. The appeal made by the right hon. Gentleman to the Government was that they should reject the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, and leave it to the right hon. Gentleman and the Committee of Selection to say what Rules should be laid down in regard to these Private Bills, and what Members should be appointed upon the Committee whose duty it would be to consider them. It might be in the recollection of the right hon. Gentleman, and of other hon. Members who sat in the last Parliament, that a Motion somewhat similar in its tendency to the present one was brought forward some years ago for regulating the proceedings of Parliamentary agents. That Motion was objected to, and the debate was adjourned for at least a week until the question could receive fair consideration, the result being that an Amendment was placed upon the Paper, upon which the original Motion was withdrawn, and the Amendment ultimately adopted. That occurred in the case of the Parliamentary agents either in the year 1878 or 1879. He would also ask the House to remember what the Rules were which were supposed to regulate the conduct of Private Business. The ordinary Notice of Motion for the nomination of a Select Committee would come under the Half-past Twelve o'Clock Rule; and any person who objected to the appointment of the Committee would have been able to place a Notice of Amendment on the Paper. Standing Order No. 207 said—

"In cases where the second or third reading of a Private Bill, or the consideration of a Bill as amended by the Committee, or any proposed clause or Amendment is opposed, the same shall be postponed until the day on which the House shall next sit."

According to that Rule, if an objection was raised merely in a Bill set down for consideration at the time of Private Business, it was necessary to adjourn the discussion until the next day upon which the House sat. If it were a matter of importance to adopt that Rule in such a trivial case as that which he had mentioned, how much more important was it to adopt the same principle in such a case as this, and to adjourn the discussion until hon. Members could have ample Notice of it. The adjournment of the debate, even until to-morrow, would enable the House to escape the difficulty in which they were now placed, and would afford an opportunity for some amicable arrangement to be arrived at. If that course were not adopted, they might have a discussion which would extend over several hours, in addition to which a feeling would be engendered that the Irish Members, in regard to this question, had not had a spirit of fair play meted out to them.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he would venture to express a hope that the Government would consent to the adjournment of the debate, seeing that the appointment of this Committee was of a novel character, and that, although Notice of the Motion had probably been given, it had never been brought prominently under the attention of the House, and many hon. Members had known nothing of it until they came down to the House. It was quite evident, from the discussion that had taken place, that there was only one voice among the Irish Members with regard to the Motion; and therefore he hoped the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. H. H. Fowler) would consent to adjourn the debate.

Mr. HIBBERT said, that last year he was in the position of his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. H. H. Fowler), and had to propose a similar Resolution. He gave Notice of the Motion, and it was before the House for several days before it was brought forward; but no complaint was made on the part of any Member from Ireland of the wording of the Resolution, or in regard to the course taken. He wished to point out to the House what their position would be supposing the Resolution had not been brought forward by his hon. Friend, and a Committee were not appointed to consider these Police and Sanitary Bills. The consequence would be that each of these Bills would be referred to a Committee appointed by the Committee of Selection, and the House would have no voice whatever in the appointment of such Committees. Therefore, hon. Members opposite would gain nothing if the Motion were rejected. The object of the present Motion was to refer all Bills, of a certain character, to a Committee to be specially appointed for the purpose of carefully considering the whole of them; and he felt quite sure that if the Bills so referred included any Irish measure, the Committee of Selection would

take care not only that an Irish Member should be placed upon the Committee, but that it should be left to the Irish Members to say who that Member should be.

MR. SMALL said, the right hon. Baronet who spoke above the Gangway (Sir John R. Mowbray) seemed to think that it was of some importance for the Committee of Selection to have the right of nominating this Committee; whereas the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert), who had just addressed the House, seemed to think that it made no difference whatever whether the Committee were appointed or not. What he complained of was the exclusion of Irish Members from Committees; and he thought it would be better to give the Committee of Selection the trouble of excluding them on every occasion, rather than that they should be cut off at one swoop. The right hon. Baronet told them that if any Irish Bill came before the Committee of Selection, he would take care that Irish Members were placed upon the Committee. It was a singular thing that English Members should be of opinion that the Irish Representatives were not to interfere at all with English Business, but that English Members had every right to interfere with Irish Business. That was the best proof which had been given for a long time of the self-satisfied way in which the English Members legislated for Ireland. He was surprised at the course which had taken by the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). He (Mr. Small) had certainly expected to find the hon. Member animated by that spirit of fair play for which he was so conspicuous when he occupied a seat below the Gangway. It might reasonably have been expected that the hon. Gentleman would have manifested the same spirit of fair play now that he had become an occupant of the Treasury Bench. After the unanimous opinion expressed by the Irish Members on that side of the House, he hoped the hon. Member would no longer resist their wishes. The Secretary to the Treasury had alluded to what occurred last year; but the hon. Member himself admitted that, on that occasion, there were no Irish Bills on the Paper. In this instance Irish Bills were affected for the first time, and that was certainly a strong reason why the Government should consent to the adjournment of the debate.

MR. BIGGAR said, that he had been very much impressed with the point raised by the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan), that by the ordinary practice of the House with regard to Private Bill legislation, when any objection was raised in regard to Private Business, the ordinary course was to defer the consideration of the objection until a succeeding day. That practice had not been followed in this case, and he was not all certain whether they had not a right to insist upon that Rule being brought into operation now. But he thought that, on the merits of the question, irrespective of those technicalities, a good case had been made out for adjourning the debate. The Rule of the House, in reference to Bills of this nature, was founded upon a strict sense of justice—namely, that Private Bill legislation was of so peculiar a nature that such a thing as a surprise must be guarded against. Therefore, whenever the merits of a particular Bill were called in question, whatever the feeling of the House was, and notwithstanding that a large majority might be in favour of another course, the practice was to postpone the discussion. For that reason he would suggest to the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. H. H. Fowler) that he should accede to the proposal now made to postpone the Motion. It was all very well to say that the Committee of Selection would act with impartiality with regard to the selection of the names of Members to serve upon the Committee; but, at the same time, the names of the Members proposed to be nominated upon the Committee were not down upon the Paper, and the Irish Members would not have an opportunity of expressing an opinion as to the merits or demerits of any hon. Member proposed to be placed on the Committee. For that reason he thought it would be well if the Government would give way, and save the House the trouble of dividing, which would be inevitable unless the proposal to adjourn the debate were acceded to. There would only be one day's delay, and no practical difference would be made in the time of the appointment of the Committee. He presumed that there was no Business ac-

tually awaiting the consideration of the Committee; and he was astonished that the Government should interpose a difficulty where there was really no controversy, and where no inconvenience would, as a matter of fact, take place. As to the argument of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert), who said that the course taken last year met with no objection, that was no reason whatever why there should be no objection now. Last year there was no Irish Bill which could have gone before the Committee; whereas, in the present year, there was certainly one important measure, if not more, which would come under the cognizance of the Committee.

MR. P. J. POWER said, that no objection was raised to the nomination of this Committee either last year or the year before; but that was because there was no Irish Bill which could be dealt with by the Committee. But even if there had been, and no objection had been raised to the appointment of the Committee, that was no reason why no objection ought to be raised now. Because the Irish Members might not have done right in one case, that formed no justification for their continuing to follow the same course now. The circumstances were altogether different from those of any previous year, because this year most important private legislation was promoted upon questions of vital interest to the Irish people; and that legislation would, in the first instance, be brought under the consideration of the Committee it was now proposed to appoint. He maintained that, under those circumstances, the Irish Members themselves were the persons entitled to say what the legislation should be; and certainly no people could be more competent to judge of the wants and wishes of the Irish people than the Irish Representatives themselves. They had been informed that Notice had been given of the intention of the hon. Gentleman opposite to make this Motion; but, if so, it was given at a period when the general body of Members were not in their places, and had no means of knowing what actually took place. All he could say was that the Irish Members knew nothing of the Notice, and the Motion itself had quite taken them by surprise. As a matter of fact, it had been sprung upon them, and, he could not help thinking, in a somewhat unfair manner. Therefore, he entirely concurred with the suggestion of his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that the debate should be adjourned. His hon. Friend did not wish to have the question forced upon the attention of the House that day, but desired to postpone the discussion of it, in order to give the Irish Members a few days to consider the action they ought to take. Then, as to the nomination of one Committee by another, he was entirely of opinion that the principle was altogether wrong. He thought that the Committee, which was to be intrusted with most important Business, should be named directly by the House, and that the House should not delegate its functions to the Committee of Selection, or to any other Committee. Taking in view all the circumstances of the case, he was sure that Her Majesty's Government would have no hesitation in acceding to a proposition so just and fair on the face of it as that which his hon. Friend had made; otherwise the Irish Members would be compelled to prolong the discussion.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he only desired to say one or two words. Of course, he could not discuss the merits of the question on the Motion for the adjournment; and he did not know that he would personally object to the proposal itself, so far as it involved the principle of delegation. But the reason he did object to it was, that it might be made the beginning of a system of delegating the work of the House to something in the nature of Standing Committees. He certainly thought that that was a point worthy of careful consideration before it was carried out. He perceived that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt) had entered the House since the commencement of the discussion; and he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) would submit to the consideration of the right hon. Gentleman whether it was an unreasonable request, when a proposal of this kind was made, and a suggestion was offered that a little more time for consideration should be allowed—whether it was unreasonable, on the part of hon. Members from Ireland, considering that the interests of their constituents might be

very much affected by the proposal, to ask for a short adjournment of the discussion? He thought that, seeing how much of principle was involved in the proposal, and how fertile it might be of further proposals in the same direction, it was only reasonable to ask for timely consideration before they subjected themselves to the disadvantages in which they might hereafter find themselves involved.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that, as the hon. Member for the Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had appealed to him, he felt bound to say a word, although he did not think he could add anything to the statements which had been already made. This was not a new question at all, but it was one with which the House was quite familiar; and therefore no object would be attained by giving further time for coming to a decision upon a question which was already well understood. The matter was all in a nutshell. The Bills affected were all Bills of a similar character, and it had been thought well to appoint a strong Committee to consider the important principles they contained, instead of having a number of separate Committees all dealing with the same questions, and, it might be, deciding in different ways and acting upon different principles. Such a course would be found to be highly inconvenient. The House had now had experience of the working of this principle of a single Committee for some years; and, on the whole, he thought everyone felt that it was the most desirable mode of dealing with the question. The right hon. Baronet the Chairman of the Committee of Selection (Sir John R. Mowbray) had already pointed out that, whether it was one Committee or a number of separate Committees, they would equally be appointed by the Committee of Selection. The only question to consider was, whether there should be one Committee to deal with all these matters upon uniform principles, instead of leaving them to be dealt with on divergent principles by separate Committees. He had no doubt whatever that the plan submitted to the House was the most advantageous plan; and he could not see how delay or adjournment would add anything to the materials they now possessed for forming a judgment upon the matter.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 26; Noes 238: Majority 212.—(Div. List, No. 40.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Standing Order 173A shall be applicable to the said Committee."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

MR. HEALY said, the Irish Members really could not allow this Resolution to pass without entering another protest. He wished to point out to the Government the very extraordinary nature of the course which was being pursued. What was proposed was this—that the House should abrogate its entire functions for the purpose of appointing a Select Committee and constituting it an *Imperium in Imperio*. In point of fact, the proposal was to vest a sort of Standing Committee with direct functions of the House in regard to the appointment of Select Committees. It appeared to him that such a proposal was a direct infringement upon the functions of the House, and that it took away from their control over the Private Business of the House. The question, therefore, assumed a very serious and important aspect. In the first place, he might point out that when an ordinary Select Committee was nominated, the names of all the Members of the Committee appeared on the Paper; and hon. Members had the power of challenging the name of every Member proposed to be appointed upon it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member is not in Order. We are now discussing the question whether Standing Order 173A shall be applicable to the said Committee; and the hon. and learned Member must confine himself to that specific Question.

MR. HEALY said, his objection was that the powers proposed to be conferred by the Standing Order were of such a character that they ought not to be intrusted to a Committee appointed by another Committee. The Standing Order provided that, in case of any Bill promoted by, and conferring powers upon, a Municipal Corporation, or Local Board, or Town Commissioners, or other public authority, the Committee should consider the provisions of the Bill in regard to police, sanitary, and other regula-

tions. He objected to give to any Committee power to appoint another Committee, either from within or without itself, with the right of exercising the large powers which the Standing Order conferred. In his view, a Committee which was to have the right of applying the powers given by the Standing Order should be a Committee which directly sprang from the House. But this Sub-Committee, if he might so call it, would be a Committee that would have power to create preliminary and technical objections to the provisions of a measure before the Bill could be referred to a Select Committee in the ordinary way, and before a single witness had been heard. In the ordinary course, a Select Committee would sit, in order to inquire into the merits of a Private Bill, and would hear all that both counsel and witnesses had to say. He denied altogether that such a right or discretionary power should be confided to a single Committee selected by another Committee. Some of the persons who would be appointed might be persons to whom hon. Members, or the promoters of these Bills, would naturally object; and, therefore, he thought it was a matter upon which the House should not proceed in haste. No doubt, it was said that the appointment of a similar Committee had been acceded to without opposition for the last two years; but, nevertheless, he thought the powers conferred by the Standing Order were much too large to delegate to a Sub-Committee, and he trusted that the discussion which had that day been originated by his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) on so important a subject would convince the House of the necessity for some change of the system of conducting Private Business. Indeed, the question had now assumed a position almost of scandal, and something ought to be done for the protection of the Private Bill legislation of the House. It was monstrous that municipal, sanitary, and police powers, affecting the health and welfare of the inhabitants of every large town in the Three Kingdoms, should be referred to a Sub-Committee in the manner now proposed. For his part, he thought they ought to go to the extent of taking another division against this extraordinary delegation of power. He sincerely hoped that the House, without further discussion, would not consent to place important powers in the hands of a Committee over whose proceedings they would have no control.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the House had now decided that this Committee should be appointed. So far the business was settled, and there was no earthly use in discussing, even if it would be in Order, the propriety of appointing a Committee. But this Standing Order No. 173A was already applicable to every Bill that came before the House which contained clauses relating to sanitary matters or to police regulations. He should have thought, therefore, that the mere existence of the Standing Order would have brought every Bill of that description under its terms, whether it was referred to the new Committee or not. It, therefore, appeared to him that this new Resolution was not necessary. Then, again, as to the wording of the Resolution itself, it appeared to him to be open to objection. It said—"That Standing Order 173A shall be applicable to the said Committee." Now, the Standing Order was applicable to a Bill; and, therefore, as a matter of phraseology, it was incorrect to apply it to the Committee itself, instead of to the Bills referred to the Committee. The Standing Order was certainly drawn up with reference, not to the Committee, but to Bills which contained provisions of a certain character. Consequently, in the matter of phraseology, it was desirable that the Resolution should be amended. It was also a matter for consideration whether it would not be advisable to introduce some modification of the Standing Order, so as to provide against any possible danger in the way indicated by the hon. and learned Member or Monaghan (Mr. Healy). Under these circumstances, he would ask the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. H. H. Fowler), who represented the Government on this question, whether, in regard to this Resolution at any rate, the Government would not agree to some postponement, in order to afford time for further consideration? If there was the danger which had been pointed out, surely it was not objectionable to ask for time to consider

the matter before the House was put to the trouble of a division.

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, the Standing Order 173A was a Standing Order passed by the House in pursuance of a Report of the first Committee which sat upon the Bills which involved sanitary and police regulations. By that Standing Order Committees were required to inquire into clauses of a certain character which were inserted in Private Bills, and to report to the House how they had dealt with such clauses. The hon. Member for the Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) was quite right in assuming that, as a general principle, the Standing Order would apply to every Committee; and he thought that was the true construction to be placed upon it, and that there was no necessity for the insertion of these words. But last year, when the Special Committee was appointed, a doubt was raised whether the Standing Order applied to it; and in order to make assurance doubly sure, the House passed a Resolution directing that the Order should apply to the Committee, and that the Committee should make, under certain circumstances, a special Report to the House. Under these circumstances, it had been considered advisable to take the same course this year. There could be no doubt that, in the ordinary way, all of these matters would have to be inquired into by the Select Committee to which any Private Bill containing clauses affecting police and sanitary matters was referred. But it was most desirable that this Special Committee should inquire into and report upon them in the first instance.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he would suggest that the difficulty would be met by amending it so that it should read — "That Standing Order 173A shall be applicable to all Bills referred to the Committee." All that was necessary was to insert the words "all Bills referred to" after the word "to." He concurred with his hon. Friend the Member for the Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) that the Standing Order could not be applicable to the Committee, but simply to the Bills referred to it for consideration. It was only a verbal correction; but he thought it ought to be made, and he would, therefore, move it as an Amendment to the original proposal.

Amendment proposed, after the word "to," to insert the words "all Bills referred to."—(*Sir Joseph M'Kenna.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. H. H. FOWLER said, that he had not the slightest objection to the words proposed to be inserted.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, as amended, proposed.

MR. SEXTON said, he wished to put a question to the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the information of the House. As he understood the matter, at present, the Committee of Selection had power to refer individual Bills to Private Bill Committees, which Committees were bound to hear counsel and witnesses. But before the meeting of these Private Bill Committees, there was to be a Report from the Special Committee under the Standing Order. Was the Special Committee equally bound, before making their Report under the Standing Order, to hear counsel and witnesses?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: Certainly.

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—ARREST OF JOHN MACDONALD FOR POACHING.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention had been directed to the case of John Macdonald, postal runner or messenger betwixt Carr Bridge and Ariemore, in the county of Inverness, who, in the month of November 1883, in the presence of several persons on the Railway platform at Ariemore, while in charge of the mail bags, was arrested by two policemen, and conveyed a prisoner to Inverness, on a charge of being concerned in a poaching affray on the River Dulnan; whether, notwithstanding his judicial denial of the alleged offence, he was detained in strict confinement for ten days; and, whether compensation can be made to him for

his wrongous imprisonment and for the expense he was put to in many ways, particularly in providing a substitute while in prison, and thereafter while the matter was under investigation by the Postal authorities?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): I have inquired into this case. Macdonald, although he is a post-runner, was not apprehended while in charge of the mail bags; and the occurrence referred in the Question was an assault by night of a very serious description, by eight men upon two water bailiffs in the employment of the Spey Fishery Board. Macdonald was incarcerated for nine days. He was apprehended on the 13th of November, and liberated on bail on the 22nd. The evidence which led to Macdonald's apprehension was his own statement to another person that he was one of the gang of eight men, and the statement of one of the water bailiffs assaulted, that he was almost sure that Macdonald was one of the party. The evidence, however, did not appear to the Crown counsel sufficient, and, therefore, Macdonald was not tried; but the evidence seems to have been such as to warrant his apprehension and his detention for further examination. That a man should be detained in prison for several days on suspicion, and afterwards liberated without trial, is always a matter of regret; but such cases are occasionally unavoidable in the administration of criminal justice. There is no ground or precedent for awarding compensation to Macdonald, and I know of no fund from which compensation could be paid. Further, with reference to this part of the Question, I must repeat that the chief cause of Macdonald's apprehension was his own statement already mentioned.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND).

MR. T. A. DICKSON asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether in any Registration Bill to be brought in for the purpose of placing on the registries the great numbers of additional voters entitled to the franchise, provision will be made for the remuneration of clerks of unions, rate collectors, and other officials, for their greatly increased duties, and if the Bill will provide that the expense shall not fall upon the ratepayers?

MR. CALLAN said, he wished, at the same time, to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, Whether he will make arrangements in the Bill for utilizing and continuing the services of the Town Clerks of the eighteen "liberated" boroughs of Ireland, or compensate the clerks for the loss of their emoluments in connection with the registration?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER), in reply, said, he would refer to the Question on the Paper—that of the hon. Member (Mr. Dickson). The matter was at present under the consideration of the Government, and he would ask his hon. Friend to postpone his Question.

PIER AND HARBOUR WORKS (ENGLAND AND WALES)—HOLYHEAD MAIL JETTY.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD asked the President of the Board of Trade, respecting the Mail Jetty, made of timber, at Holyhead, What was the cost of the Mail Jetty erected in the year 1858; what amount has been spent in the alteration and repairing of the same up to the present time; what is the estimate for the alterations and repairs of the same now going on; is the condition of the Jetty such as would justify the Government in spending a large sum in alterations and repairs; and, taking into consideration the present condition of the Jetty, and the large amount spent annually in repairs, would it not be better economy to erect a stone pier in place of the present Jetty?

MR. GRAY: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I would ask, Whether it is not a fact that the original scheme submitted to the Government twenty years ago provided for a stone pier?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot answer the Question of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) positively; but if he will put it on the Paper I will endeavour to do so. As to the first Question, the first cost of the timber mail jetty at Holyhead and its extension was, from 1858 to 1864, £48,226; since that time £26,985 has been spent in repair and renewal. The estimate of the work for raising the platform, required by the Post Office in connection with the recent mail contract, is £7,000;

this is special and not ordinary work. The annual expenditure for renewals for some years past has been about £2,000, and appears, so far, to be maintaining the work in fair condition. As to a stone pier being more economical, I have no proposal for a stone pier before me, and the question of comparative expense would be for the consideration of the Treasury. I may, however, mention that Sir John Hawkshaw tells me that such a work could not cost less than £150,000.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—THE TROOP-SHIP "POONAH."

Mr. TATTON EGERTON asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, Whether, at the time that Admiral Lethbridge considered it safe to send off the transport *Poonah* from Queenstown to Portsmouth, he was aware of the warning in *The Times* of 18th instant giving notice of a severe cyclone travelling east north-east, and expected on the French and English coasts about the 22nd?

Mr. CAINE, in reply, said, that when the *Poonah* left Queenstown, they were not aware of the storm warning that appeared. The *Poonah* left Queenstown at 10 A.M. on the 20th February, and the telegram giving notice of the storm did not reach Queenstown from the Meteorological Office until after the departure of the ship.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND.—THE IRISH CIRCUITS.

Mr. GIBSON asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Is there any objection to laying upon the Table a Copy of the Report of the Committee of the Irish Judges on the subject of the Irish Circuits?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER), in reply, said, that it would be unusual to make a Report of that kind public.

Mr. GIBSON said, that he would repeat the Question that day week, when he would also ask whether such Reports were not laid before Parliament in the time of the late Government; and, whether any of the Judges objected to the production of this particular Report?

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—MR. ROBERT GRAHAM, CLERK OF COOTEHILL UNION.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it has come under his notice that Robert Graham, clerk of Cootehill Union, has been called on by the Registrar General to resign the office of Superintendent Registrar, in consequence of repeated improper conduct, and very insulting language towards the medical officer of the Tullavire Dispensary District; if it has come under his notice that said clerk was censured by the Local Government Board, September 6th 1884, for—

"Very improper language towards Mr. Owen M'Cabe and Rev. Mr. M'Kenna, P.P. during the sworn inquiry held by Mr. Armstrong, Local Government Board Inspector, July 8th 1884," and "cautioned against a repetition of such conduct in future,"

that said clerk swore, at inquiry held by Mr. Matheson, B.L. January 28th 1885, he was never before censured; and, if the Local Government Board, in view of the correspondence before them relative to the last March Election of Poor Law Guardian for the Corween Division of Cootehill Union, and the minutes of sworn inquiry, July 8th, relative to same, will continue Robert Graham in the office of clerk and returning officer?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The facts are substantially as stated in the Question. It does not appear that Mr. Graham was sworn when he gave evidence before Mr. Matheson at the inquiry referred to; but the Local Government Board will call upon him for an explanation in regard to his alleged untruthfulness on that occasion.

LIGHTHOUSE ILLUMINANTS COMMITTEE.

Mr. GRAY asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether it is the fact that the illuminant experiments at the South Foreland are to be discontinued next month, and how soon the Report of the Elder Brethren of Trinity House may be expected; and, whether, before the termination of these experiments, a trial will be made of the double "triform" plan of lighting, the refusal to test which by the Illuminants Committee caused the resignation of Dr. Ball, F.R.S., and other representatives of the Commissioners of Irish Lights?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I have communicated with the Elder Brethren on this subject, and I have received the following reply:—

"The experiments as a whole, as at present arranged, are to be discontinued at the end of the present month; but the Report being dependent on the receipt of intelligence from many observers, will occupy some time in completion. As regards the double 'triform' gas apparatus the Elder Brethren understand that, at least, six burners were to be used; but as with only four burners a temperature of 350 Fahrenheit was sustained at South Foreland, and several valuable lenses were cracked with the heat, it is not considered desirable to try six burners. The Elder Brethren have recently had a visit from Dr. Ball and his colleagues of the Irish Lights, and they have reason to believe that these gentlemen are satisfied with the experiments."

MR. GRAY: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether he is aware that the advocates of gas illumination for lighthouses claim that the double triform is the best for gas-lighting; and is it a fixed arrangement now that what the advocates of gas illumination consider to be the best system is not to be tested in experiments which it is assumed will test the value of the various lights? This is a very serious matter.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The further Question of the hon. Gentleman invites an argumentative reply; but I will answer it in this way. The experiments are intended to show the comparative value of gas and oil; and if they satisfactorily agree upon a point with regard, say, to three burners, then, inasmuch as the multiplication of burners would equally apply to gas and oil, there would be no necessity for continuing the experiments further. There are other and special reasons against such an experiment as has been suggested in the letter from the Elder Brethren from which I have quoted.

MR. GRAY: In consequence of the extremely unsatisfactory answer which the right hon. Gentleman has given, I beg to give Notice that I will call further attention to this matter.

SOUTH AMERICA—THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC—CLAIMS OF PATRICK CANTLON.

MR. GRAY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Foreign Office has received from Patrick Cantlon, of Chirilcoy, Buenos Ayres, a communication dated December 8th 1884, and addressed to Earl Granville, detailing outrages which were committed upon him by soldiers of the National Government during the Revolution in the Argentine Republic in 1880; whether Mr. Egerton, the English Chargé d'Affaires at Buenos Ayres, has taken any action upon the representations made to him by Mr. Cantlon; and if not, would he state on what grounds; and, whether the Secretary of State has investigated the complaints set forth in Mr. Cantlon's memorial to him of December; and, if so, with what result?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The letter referred to by the hon. Member has been received at the Foreign Office. Patrick Cantlon's claim for compensation has been officially supported by Mr. Egerton, by Sir Horace Rumbold, and his successors in charge of Her Majesty's Legation at Buenos Ayres; and on the 19th of January last an instruction was sent to Mr. Monson, Her Majesty's Minister to the Argentine Republic, directing him to urge the settlement of this claim upon the Argentine Government.

INLAND REVENUE STAMP OFFICE, DUBLIN.

MR. GRAY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, having opened an office at the Four Courts, Dublin, for the sale of stamps and collection of Duty, are now, in addition, selling all kinds of unstamped forms and papers at greatly reduced rates, some at half-price; whether he is aware that this latter proceeding, in regard to unstamped papers, inflicts considerable loss upon the law stationers; and, whether the Treasury will restrict the Commissioners to the sale of stamps and the collection of Duties?

MR. HIBBERT (for Mr. CHILDERS): The Inland Revenue Stamp Office at the Four Courts replaces the former licensed vendors; and, like them, it sells unstamped forms for the convenience of the Legal Profession and the public. These forms are sold at a rate which yields a reasonable profit to the State, besides being a convenience to the purchaser of stamps.

MR. GRAY asked, whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that the Office issued a Circular, stating that they were selling unstamped papers at half the price charged by traders; and, whether the Office would be permitted to enter into an unfair competition with traders?

MR. HIBBERT said, that the fact might be so; but a fair profit was realized.

MR. CALLAN: Does a similar practice prevail in England?

MR. HIBBERT: I have no doubt it does.

MR. GRAY gave Notice that he would put another Question on the subject.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, GALWAY—PROFESSOR D'ARCY THOMPSON.

MR. GIBSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How long has Mr. D'Arcy Thompson been a Professor in the Queen's Colleges, Ireland; how long has he acted as Librarian in Galway College; who is Librarian in Belfast Queen's College, and when was he appointed; who is Librarian in Cork Queen's College, and when was he appointed; and, why is Mr. D'Arcy Thompson not given an appointment of a similar tenure to that enjoyed by his colleagues in the other Colleges?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. D'Arcy Thompson was appointed Professor of Greek in Queen's College, Galway, in 1861. In January, 1877, he was selected for the post of acting librarian, at a time when the Government had under consideration the question of appointing librarians to the Queen's Colleges. He continued so to act until 1883, when an application was received from him that his appointment might be made permanent; but the Government did not consider it advisable to alter the then existing arrangement, and they certainly are not disposed at the present moment to create a new vested interest in connection with the Queen's Colleges. The present librarian at Belfast is Professor Meissner. He was appointed in July, 1882. The librarian at Cork is Mr. Caulfeild. He was appointed in January, 1876.

SOUTH AFRICA—TROOPS FOR THE SOUDAN.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any reply has been sent by Lord Wolseley to the offers made by Colonel Methuen and Sir C. Warren of the services of 600 Cavalry and 1,000 Colonial and Boer sharpshooters in the Soudan; whether there is any foundation for the statement that has appeared in *The Times* of the 28th ult. that a proposal has been made to organise a force of 5,000 Zulus; and, whether, in view of the strain upon our very small Army at home, that or any similar proposal for the employment of Native African troops in the Soudan is likely to meet with the favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am not aware whether any answer has been sent by Lord Wolseley to the offer of services made by Colonel Methuen and Sir Charles Warren. I do not think there is any foundation for the statement that a proposal has been made to organize a force of 5,000 Zulus for the Soudan; but a proposition has been received from the Lieutenant Governor of Natal for the organization of a corps of Natives of that Colony. It would not be possible, until we have further information as to the progress of affairs in South Africa, to say whether we could take advantage of any of these offers. Of course, the subject will be kept under consideration. Lord Wolseley has expressed himself favourably with regard to the acceptance, with some modifications, of the proposal of Colonel Methuen and Sir Charles Warren.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: Has Lord Wolseley given an answer?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I do not know whether he has sent any answer. I said that he transmitted the offers home. Neither do I know whether the offer has been made direct to Lord Wolseley.

MR. HEALY asked, whether Great Britain had ever employed any savages against white men since the American War.

[No reply.]

COMMISSIONERS OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—RESULT OF SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS—SUPPLY TO SCHOOL MANAGERS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, with reference to his recent statement that the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland give to managers of schools on application particulars of the results obtained by teachers under their management in examinations for class promotion, Whether he is aware that the Commissioners have lately re-

fused to give such information to managers, as being against the practice of the Department; and, whether the Commissioners still continue to allege any, and if so what, reason for refusing to inform a teacher, who applies to them directly, what marks in each subject and what total per-centage he had obtained in any examination?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that, through a mistake in the Education Office, an erroneous answer was, unfortunately, recently given to the manager of a school who applied on this subject; but the mistake has since been rectified, and is not likely to occur again. I should add to the answer I have already given the hon. Member on this subject, that the Commissioners invariably communicate to the managers the occurrence of success, as well as of failure at an examination; and that they are prohibited by their published rules from communicating directly with a teacher.

Mr. SEXTON asked, whether any reason could be alleged why the Commissioners should refuse to give a teacher, who failed in an examination for promotion, such information as might enable him to remedy his deficiencies before the next examination?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that they will give such information on being applied to by the managers of schools.

Mr. SEXTON said, that he would again call attention to the matter.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—FIGHT FOR A DRUM—FIVEMILETOWN PETTY SESSIONS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Government have noticed that, in a case heard at the Fivemiletown (Tyrone) Petty Sessions, on the 5th ultimo, by J. A. Pomeroy and Major R. Brown, justices, it was proved that a man named Sherry had gone, disguised, with others, into the dwelling-house of one Thomas Little, and, while his associates decoyed Mr. Little out of the house, had assaulted Mrs. Little, set fire to the house, and attempted to carry away a drum, but being prevented by the return of Mr. Little, made a dangerous assault upon him with a weapon known as a hook; whether Sergeant Green, the member of the Constabulary force in charge of the prosecution, applied to the justices named to send the case to a higher Court for trial, and whether the justices refused the application, inflicted on Sherry no heavier punishment than a fine of £3, and refused to award Thomas Little any compensation, either out of the fine or otherwise, for furniture broken and damaged by Sherry; whether Thomas Little and Mr. Pomeroy, one of the justices, were some time since opposing litigants; and, what action the Government will take in reference to the case?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This case arose out of the disputed possession of a drum, which had been purchased by subscription by an Orange Lodge, and which Thomas Little, who had it in his keeping, had declined to give up. On the evening of the occurrence, Sherry, with another man, entered Little's house; and while his companion induced Little to leave the house, Sherry attempted to abstract the drum, but was prevented by Little's wife, whose shouts brought her husband to her assistance, and he, seeing what was going on, struck Sherry with a shovel, and attempted to stab him with a pitchfork, but was prevented by his wife. Sherry then succeeded in making his escape, but without the drum. There was no satisfactory evidence given as to Sherry being disguised, and it was not shown that he violently assaulted Little or his wife, or, in fact, did anything beyond struggling to carry off the drum. The allegation as to his setting fire to the house is based on the fact that, in trying to get at the drum, he upset a lamp; and the weapon "known as a hook" was an instrument apparently intended to cut down the drum which was hanging from the rafters of the house. The police did apply to have the case returned for trial; but the magistrates considered the requirements of the case would be met by fining Sherry £3 and 5*s.* 6*d.* costs. I am informed that there had been litigation between Little and Mr. Pomeroy, one of the magistrates; but having regard to what I have stated, I think justice was done in the present case, and that there is no reason for interference.

Mr. SEXTON asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the police were so dissatisfied with the

decision of the magistrates that they gave notice of appeal?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes; I am aware of it.

THE AUSTRALIAN COLONIES—QUEENSLAND—MOVEMENT FOR SEPARATION.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any movement has taken place in Queensland for a division of that Colony; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have taken any decision thereon?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: No doubt, there is somewhat of such a movement in Northern Queensland, chiefly in consequence of the inability of employers in the Northern district to obtain Indian and other coloured labour which they require. Her Majesty's Government have not yet found themselves called upon to take any decision thereon. But, in consequence of communications they have received, they have asked the Colonial Ministry for any expression of their views on the subject which they may be disposed to give. Her Majesty's Government has, at the same time, intimated that they would be very reluctant to advise a separation of part of the Colony, if the wishes and requirements of the residents in that part can be otherwise fairly met, in so far as, after due inquiry, they may be found to be just and reasonable.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.).

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he will give a tabular Return of the Revenue and Expenditure of Egypt, together with a list of the Loans, with the annual charges thereon, whether for interest or sinking fund, and the amount received from the sources of revenue respectively hypothecated to them?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There will be no objection to prepare the Return for presentation to Parliament.

PIER AND HARBOUR WORKS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he will lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing the Pier and Harbour Works commenced since the Act 46 and 47 Vic. c. 26, became Law; the amount of the contract in each case; when no contract has been taken the amount sanctioned for each work; the amount expended up to the present time; the works sanctioned but not yet commenced; the amount of the contract in such cases; and the dates when the work is likely to be commenced?

MR. HIBBERT: I think a Return to the general effect suggested would be useful, and that the 31st of this month would be a convenient date up to which to complete it. I will cause such a Return to be prepared accordingly.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE SUPPLIES.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for War, with reference to the statement of the War Correspondent of *The Morning Post* that a quantity of supplies sent up the Nile for the use of our troops in the Soudan had been rendered useless in consequence of having been packed in trade cases, Whether, in addition to the 25 per cent. loss reported on articles comprised as grocery rations and packed in the Government Establishment at Woolwich, any loss has been reported in articles of supply sent out in trade cases; and, if so, what loss, and in what articles; and, if he would state by whom these articles were bought, and whether they were inspected; and, if so, by whom, previous to their despatch from this Country?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No Nile supplies were packed in what are technically known as "trade cases;" but special packages were provided by contractors in accordance with samples decided on by the Committee on Nile Boat Service. As I stated on the 27th of February, these were designedly made lighter than ordinary field cases. Losses are reported in the following articles:—Bacon, cheese, biscuits, pickles, soap, and matches. The exact loss will not be known until the supplies are all opened for use; but the average loss on these articles is estimated at about 12 per cent from all causes, including total loss by wreckage and upsetting of boats, theft, climate, and damage to packages. The proportion of loss due to defective packing alone cannot be stated until the detailed accounts are received. The

articles were purchased in the usual way by the Director of Army Contracts. The quality was determined by the Special Committee on Nile Boat Service; and the contractors' deliveries were tested by Commissariat and medical officers at Woolwich. It is reported from Korti that the quality of every article was found, without exception, to be excellent.

THE EXTRA POLICE TAX, LIMERICK.

Mr. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What steps the Government intend to take to realise the amount due from the Corporation of Limerick in respect of extra police duty, which has been recovered against the Corporation by verdict of a competent court in Ireland?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I can only refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply which I gave, on the 4th of December last, to a Question of the noble Viscount the Member for County Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton) on this subject, and add that a Bill which will include this among other matters, is now being prepared.

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND)—ASSIMILATION TO ENGLISH FRANCHISE.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, When the Government propose to assimilate the Irish Municipal Franchise to that of England?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (who replied): The Government are fully alive to the defects in the existing municipal franchise in Ireland and to the desirableness of legislating on the subject; which, however, is one of those which must be included in the general statement already made, that no announcement of the Government's programme of legislation for the Session can be looked for until further progress has been made with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill.

Mr. HEALY said, that the right hon. Gentleman, in replying to a previous Question, said a Bill was being prepared. Was that being done in this case?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that a Bill was being prepared; but that they could not make any further statement until some progress was made with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill.

Mr. HEALY: Will this Bill have precedence of the coercion measure referred to?

[No reply.]

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE ACT AMENDMENT BILL—REDUCTION OF THE IRISH BENCH.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, To what purpose it is proposed to apply the £25,000 per annum to be saved by the Irish Judicature Act Amendment Bill?

Mr. T. A. DICKSON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether the Government are really serious about pressing forward this Bill this Session?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): Yes, Sir. In reply to the Question of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), I have to say that there will be little or no immediate saving effected by the Bill; but, ultimately, when all the Judges whose places are not to be filled have retired, and their pensions have lapsed by death, the saving will be about £17,000 a-year. There will be no special application of the saving; but the charge on the Consolidated Fund will be diminished by that amount. The hon. and learned Gentleman should remember that the salary list of the Irish Judicial Bench is now more than one-half that of the English, although the population is only a little over one-sixth, and it is nearly twice that of the Scotch, although Ireland has less than one-third additional population.

Mr. GIBSON: I rise to Order. The right hon. Gentleman has been asked a Question, and he has answered it. He is now making a speech, going into matters of a debatable nature?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): No, Sir; I am giving to the House and the hon. and learned Gentleman who has asked me a certain Question as to the saving of expense in the Irish Courts, some figures to show what that expense is. I think that is entirely relevant to the Question. In England the Court fees received cover the cost of the administrative department; but in Ireland there is a deficit charged to the taxpayer.

MR. GIBSON: I must again rise to Order. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, if the right hon. Gentleman is in Order, having answered the Question, to go into these matters, which are subjects of debate and discussion?

MR. SPEAKER: I understand the right hon. Gentleman is only stating facts in answer to the Question.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I will repeat what I was stating when the right hon. and learned Gentleman interrupted me —that in England the Court fees cover the cost of the administrative department, whereas in Ireland there is a deficit charged on the taxpayers of £70,000 a-year.

MR. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that unless the saving of £17,000 a-year effected by this Bill be applied to some useful Irish object, I will give the Bill my most determined opposition.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether it was intended to apply any of the saving to the purpose of the Judicial Bench in England?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Certainly not.

COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND)—RETURNS FOR 1883 AND 1884.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he would furnish a Return showing the number of petitions filed in the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland in the years 1883 and 1884 respectively, distinguishing the petitions from the districts of Cork, Belfast, Derry, Galway, and Limerick on which it is proposed by the Local Court of Bankruptcy (Ireland) Bill to confer a local jurisdiction; and showing the estimated assets available for dividend in each district?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN who replied said: There is no objection to this Return being given.

ISLANDS OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC—SAMOA AND TONGA.

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Sir Edward Malet has given the assurances referred to in a Foreign Office Telegram of 4th December 1884, that Great Britain will respect the independence of Samoa and Tonga; whether reciprocal assurances have been received from the German Government; and, whether there is any objection to lay upon the Table the Documents in which these reciprocal assurances are recorded?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir Edward Malet did give the assurances referred to in accordance with his Instructions, and reciprocal assurances were received from the German Government. The documents recording those assurances have already been laid in the Parliamentary Papers on New Guinea presented last month (C. 4,273), and are numbered 73,136, and 181.

MR. GORST: May I ask whether the German Government considers itself bound by the statements made in the despatch of Lord Granville to Sir Edward Malet?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I must ask for Notice of the Question.

NORTH BORNEO.

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any Protocol has been drawn up at Madrid, to which Her Majesty's Government is to be a party, recognising British sovereignty over North Borneo; and, if so, when and in what manner such sovereignty was acquired?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No Protocol has been drawn up at Madrid recognizing British Sovereignty over North Borneo.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—BALLYMENA BENCH OF MAGISTRATES.

MR. MOORE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government have taken, or propose to take, any steps to modify the constitution of the Ballymeny bench of magistrates; and, whether it is a fact that there is still not a single Roman Catholic magistrate on the bench, whilst seven of the justices in the one district are closely related to one another by ties of blood relationship or marriage?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No well-grounded complaint as to the Ballymena Bench of Magistrates has ever been brought under the notice of the Lord Chancellor, who informs me that, whatever ties of relationship may subsist between some of the magistrates, they appear to discharge their duties in a proper manner. I understand there is no Roman Catholic on this Bench. The

name of one gentleman of that persuasion was submitted to the Lord Chancellor, but the Lieutenant of the county declined to recommend him for the Commission; and the Lord Chancellor, after some correspondence, came to the conclusion that he would not be warranted in overruling Lord Waveney's decision.

MR. CALLAN: In reference to the answer just given by the right hon. Gentleman with reference to the Lord Lieutenant of the County Antrim, May I ask, is it a fact that Lord Waveney, the present Lord Lieutenant of the county, is the first name to a recommendation in favour of the same person made in the year 1882; also, whether it is a fact that a recommendation was made of this gentleman, signed by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor, the then Lord Lieutenant of the county, Sir Edward MacNaghten; and, also, whether the present Lord Lieutenant of the county has not, in this case, refused his own recommendation?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I will ask the hon. Member to put down this Question on the Paper. I cannot answer without Notice.

MR. CALLAN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware whether that is a fact?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not.

MR. SEXTON: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman, who has given his admission to the fact that there is no Catholic on this Bench, whether the Lord Chancellor, when any complaint is made, refers to the Lord Lieutenant of the county, who is generally a fossilized Tory?

[No reply.]

THE ORDNANCE SURVEY—HUNDRED OF CHIPPENHAM.

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY asked the Junior Lord of the Treasury, When the Ordnance maps, on the scale of 25 inches to the mile, for the Hundred of Chippenham, in the county of Wilts, the survey of which was completed last summer, will be issued?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE: The map in question will be published towards the end of this year. A portion only of the work was completed last summer; the final out-of-doors operations are being completed now.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—RATES OF INTEREST.

MR. O'SULLIVAN asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether an order has been issued for reducing the rate of interest charged to Boards of Guardians in Ireland for loans under the Labourers' (Ireland) Act; and, if not, if the Treasury intend charging a higher rate of interest for loans under "The Labourers' Act, 1883," than they charge for loans under the Land Act of 1881?

MR. HIBBERT: The rate of interest for these loans has been reconsidered; and as soon as the Bill introduced by my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland has become law, the Treasury will fix the rates of interest at 3¼ per cent for loans repayable in 35 years, 3½ per cent for loans repayable in 40 years, and 3¾ per cent for a longer term, subject always to the sufficiency of the security. This is a reduction of ½ per cent or more on the present rates of interest.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE SUB-POSTMASTER AT CRAANFORD, CO. WEXFORD.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is a fact that Mr. Edward Byrne, Sub-Postmaster of Craanford, in the county of Wexford, was threatened with dismissal by the Post Office authorities in Dublin because meetings of a branch of the National League were held at Craanford, in the same house as the Post Office; whether, if this be so, there is any rule prohibiting the meetings of political Constitutional Committees in a house, part of which is used as a Post Office; and, whether this rule is in force in England as well as Ireland?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, that it was not the case that the threat of dismissal had been made. The man had applied to the Postal Authorities for advice, and was informed that the Department always discouraged its officials from connecting themselves with political agitations.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: In connection with the answer to the Question, I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman, Whether or not it is a fact that Mr. Edward Byrne, sub-postmaster of Craanford, as a matter of fact, was not taking any active part in the Na-

tional League movement; and, whether he had no further connection with the movement, except that in one of the rooms of the post-office meetings of the National League were held?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I can only repeat my answer. I am not aware whether rooms in the post-office were let for that purpose.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: The right hon. Gentleman has stated that no threat of dismissal was held out to the sub-postmaster of Craanford. I would like to know whether it is not actually a fact that the Post Office Authorities compelled Mr. Byrne to give a written undertaking or agreement that he would not allow National League meetings to be held in the house where the post-office was, and that the alternative to signing this agreement was that he should be dismissed? I believe I have a copy of this undertaking that is denied in my possession.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The answer I have given is the only one I can give.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman—[*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Order!"] Very well; I beg to give Notice that on to-morrow afternoon I shall ask Whether it is a fact that the Post Office Authorities compelled Mr. Byrne to give a written undertaking, with the alternative of dismissal, that he would not allow National League meetings to be held in the house?

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—CHAPLAINS IN THE SOUDAN.

MR. J. G. TALBOT asked the Secretary of State for War, How many chaplains are attached to the expeditionary force under Lord Wolseley, and how they are distributed; whether any chaplains were attached to the advanced force under Sir Herbert Stewart; how many chaplains are attached to the troops now on their way to Suakin from England and India; and, whether it is intended that any chaplains should be attached to the advanced forces in the field, to minister to the sick and wounded?

MR. BUCHANAN: May I ask the noble Marquess in his answer to give the number of Presbyterian chaplains with the various forces in Egypt?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: According to the latest Returns received, which are for the 1st of January, the chaplains with Lord Wolseley's Expedition were distributed as follows:—Church of England, one at Dongola, two at Wady Halfa; Roman Catholic, one each at Dongola, Wady Halfa, and Assouan; Presbyterian, one at Wady Halfa, and one at Assouan; Wesleyan, one at Assouan. Probably at the present date this distribution has changed by the move of several chaplains more to the front. So far as I am aware, there was not a chaplain with the Force under the late Sir Herbert Stewart. The chaplains attached to Sir Gerald Graham's Force are two Church of England, two Roman Catholic, one Presbyterian, and one Wesleyan. The question of sending chaplains with an advanced Force is for the General in immediate command to decide. With reference to the Question of which the hon. Member for Edinburgh City (Mr. Buchanan) has given me private Notice, there are two Presbyterian chaplains in Lower Egypt, of whom one is at Cairo and the other at Alexandria.

MR. BUCHANAN: Is there any Presbyterian chaplain with Lord Wolseley's Force at Korti?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have stated that the Presbyterian chaplains are—one at Wady Halfa, and one at Assouan.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) ACT—CONVERSION OF CONSOLS—THE COINAGE BILL.

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, during the present Session of Parliament, Her Majesty's Government intend to develop the scheme for the conversion of 3 per cent. Consols into a 2¾ per cent. and 2½ per cent. Stock by the exercise of compulsory powers; and, whether he can relieve the uncertainty in the minds of the recipients of weekly wages as to the real value of the half-sovereign, by announcing his determination not to re-introduce the Coinage Bill, which converted the gold ten shilling piece into a token of the intrinsic value of nine shillings?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to the first part of the Question, I have to say that the National Debt (Conversion of Stock) Act, passed on the 3rd of July last, gave to Her Majesty's Government two

years in which to offer optional conversions of Debt. I have no communication on the subject to make to Parliament at this moment. As to the second part of the Question, I have to remind the hon. Member that the intrinsic value of the silver coins which the recipient of weekly wages is bound to accept for a payment of 10*s.* is not quite 7*s.* 5*d.* I do not think that, under such circumstances, any sensible recipient of weekly wages requires his mind to be relieved on that subject.

Lord JOHN MANNERS: Is it intended to re-introduce the Coinage Bill?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): As the noble Lord is well aware, I am not in a position at this moment to state whether or not the Bill will be re-introduced this year.

ARMY (INDIA)—BOUNTIES TO SOLDIERS.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, To state the nature and extent of information which the India Office Records can supply in regard to the amount paid in bounties to induce men of the European garrison of India to volunteer to remain in India, and the rates of bounty paid, the annual cost and number of men who have volunteered from the different branches of the service in each year from 1869-70 to latest year?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The India Office Records do not afford any means of giving the information required; but I shall be glad to furnish my hon. and gallant Friend with Papers showing the cost and effect of the special grant of bounty during the last 18 months.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—LOANS TO SCHOOL BOARDS.

Mr. JAMES asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he has received any communication from the Treasury with respect to the Memorial presented to the Education Department in July 1884, on the terms of the rate of interest and annual instalments made to the Public Works Loan Commissioners by School Boards, for the purposes of school buildings in poor and populous localities.

Mr. MUNDELLA: I have received a reply from the Treasury to the Memorial presented in July last. It has already been laid on the Table of this House, and, I understand, will be issued to-morrow. The Treasury have agreed to reduce their rate for loans, and to charge 3½ per cent up to 35 years, the period for the currency of loans, which, should, in their opinion, be normal. In loans up to 40 years the rate will be 3¾, and up to 50 4 per cent. They are also prepared to accept repayment of loans up to 30 years in the form of a fixed annuity, instead of by equal annual instalments as heretofore.

PUBLIC MEETINGS—THE RIOTS AT ASTON HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER, who had given Notice of a Question relating to the Aston riots, said, he thought he might save some time and anxiety to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade if he were to state that he put the Question with no animus whatever. ["Oh, oh!"] He had not been instigated by, nor been in communication with, any members of the Conservative Party at Birmingham, and he unearthed the hatchet, if it could be so called, entirely on his own responsibility.

Mr. SPEAKER interposing, said, the hon. Member must confine himself to putting the Question.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER then asked the President of the Board of Trade, If his attention has been called to the trial and conviction of Peter Joyce, alias Larry Mack, at Birmingham, on March 2nd, for uttering a false, scandalous, and malicious libel against Mr. R. C. Jarvis, a gentleman of Birmingham; whether his attention has further been called to the summing up of the learned Judge, who stated that—

"They had heard Mr. Jarvis was a very respectable gentleman in Birmingham, and he had no doubt that he was; but, if he had been guilty of the conduct charged upon him, all his respectability of character would not avail against truth;"

and, again—

"He also thought they would have no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that the libel was as false as it was wicked, scandalous, and malicious;"

and, whether he is now prepared to retract and apologise for an allegation put forward by him concerning

the character of an honourable gentleman, which has been proved before Judge and Jury to have been a scandalous and malicious libel? He also wished to ask a Question of which he had given the right hon. Gentleman private Notice—namely, Whether the right hon. Gentleman's attention had been further called to the expression of opinion on the part of the learned Judge that the affidavits of these roughs had been taken by the solicitors to the Liberal Association without due caution such as should have been shown by

"Officers of this High Court, and persons in whom the country reposed great confidence;"

and, further—

"that unless there was some responsible person, who had not been produced at the trial, who vouched for all these people who had made affidavits, then Messrs. Norton and Redfern's conduct was deserving of great blame!"

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I can well believe the statement of the hon. Baronet, that he has not put the Question at the request of the Conservative Party at Birmingham; for I believe the local leaders of that Party much regret that this matter should have been again raised. The addition which the hon. Baronet has made to it was only communicated to me after I came to the House. It consists, as far as I can gather, of an additional extract from the summing up of the learned Judge. I have had no opportunity of comparing it with the reports in the newspapers, and I cannot say whether it is correct or not. In any case, however, I should not think it my duty to make any comment on the remarks of the learned Judge in his summing up. The hon. Baronet appears to be incompletely informed as to the circumstances referred to in his Question. It appears that the defence in the case of Peter Joyce was that he was not the person who made the declaration which was the subject of the prosecution; and, under these circumstances, no evidence whatever was tendered on his behalf as to the truth or otherwise of the alleged libel. I do not know how the learned Judge arrived at his conclusion; but I assume that, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, he accepted the denial of Mr. Jarvis, the person referred to in the declaration. As the hon. Baronet has thought fit to revive this matter, I have to point out that the truth of the declaration was made the subject of another inquiry held before the stipendiary magistrate, when a man named Reed was prosecuted by Mr. Jarvis for libel. On that occasion, Mr. Jarvis denied the truth of the statements contained in the statutory declaration, but he admitted, in cross-examination, that he had given tickets to roughs to go to Aston, and that numbers of these roughs had come to his shop the day after the demonstration, declaring that he had engaged them, and claiming payment for their services to the Conservative Party. He also admitted that in the case of one man he had sent him to Mr. Barton, the secretary of the Conservative Association, with his private card. After hearing that and other evidence for the prosecution, the stipendiary dismissed the charge without calling for evidence for the defence. Under these circumstances, I have nothing to add to an answer which I gave to a similar Question by the hon. Baronet on 23rd of February last.

RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—SIR PETER LUMSDEN, CHIEF BOUNDARY COMMISSIONER.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Sir Peter Lumsden, feeling aggrieved at the position in which he was placed, tendered his resignation to Her Majesty's Government; whether he has since received such assurances of support as have induced him cordially to consent to continue his duties; and, whether the Ameer of Affghanistan, after having expressed alarm, has been reassured as to the intentions of Her Majesty's Government to maintain and support the integrity of his territories?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I stated on Tuesday the instructions which had been given to Sir Peter Lumsden and the advice by him tendered to the Afghan authorities; but I must decline to answer the Question which the hon. Member, under a misapprehension as to what has passed, has asked as to the alleged resignation of Sir Peter Lumsden. There is no reason to doubt that the Ameer, after the assurances he has received, reposes perfect confidence in Her Majesty's Government, and his approaching visit to India is the best evidence of it.

GENERAL GORDON'S DIARY.

MR. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the Diary of General Gordon, which is now on its way to the Foreign Office, will be laid upon the Table of the House, after it has been received?

MR. W. H. JAMES asked the following Question, of which he had given private Notice:—Whether, in view of the publication of these Diaries, the Government would put themselves in possession of the views of General Gordon's nearest relatives?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Perhaps I may be allowed to answer these Questions. I think I have already stated that, until General Gordon's diaries are received, it will be impossible for us to give any absolute pledge as to what will be done with them. I may add, in explanation, that we really do not know what will be the character of those diaries. If they were, as was the diary of General Stewart, which was prepared under General Gordon's direction, a sort of substitute for despatches, they will, of course, be treated in the same way as other public documents, and the Government will be responsible for the disposal of them. If, on the other hand, it appears that they are of a private character, of course the relatives of General Gordon will be consulted. But, as I have said, until the documents have been received, it will be impossible to state in what manner they will be disposed of.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—MILITARY CO-OPERATION OF THE COLONIES.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If he will lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the answer sent to the Australian Colonies, in reply to their offer of Troops for the Soudan?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I hope that in a few days all the Papers connected with this matter will be in the hands of hon. Members. With reference to what has fallen from my hon. Friend behind me, I will not anticipate what these Papers will show beyond saying that, nowhere will it be found that at any time, or on any occasion, were the offers of Canada or of any of the Australian Colonies declined. The only doubt ever entertained or expressed was as to the date at which, from a military point of view, the offers could best be availed of. As an epitome of how the matter stands, I will read an extract from a telegram, the last of a series, which has, a few days ago, been sent to Victoria, South Australia, and Queensland—

"Her Majesty's Government are carefully considering the patriotic offer of troops. While the disposal of further contingents during the summer heat in the Soudan would be most difficult to arrange, if Colony, either independently, or acting jointly with others, can despatch force in August to arrive in Egypt in September, Her Majesty's Government will most gladly receive it."

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Will my hon. Friend lay on the Table that despatch, with the date on which it was sent?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Yes, certainly.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—LORD WOLSELEY'S ADDRESS TO THE TROOPS.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he would telegraph to Lord Wolseley, asking him to forward the text of the speech recently addressed by him to the troops of General Gordon at Korti?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In reference to this subject, I stated, the other day, that we had no official Report as to the observations said to have been made by Lord Wolseley in addressing the Native troops at Korti. I do not propose to telegraph to Lord Wolseley, asking him to forward the text of his speech, or otherwise to call his attention to the matter. He is, as I said before, in receipt of the Instructions of Her Majesty's Government, and we have full confidence in the manner in which he has carried out and will continue to carry out those Instructions. I do not think it would be desirable to indicate any want of confidence in Lord Wolseley by calling upon him for constant explanations of statements made by newspaper correspondents.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN).

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is truth in the following items of recent news from the seat of war in the Soudan:—

"The so-called friendly tribes are rapidly becoming very unfriendly since they do not see immediate prospect of farther gain by friendliness."—(Several Papers.)

"The destruction of property by British troops has caused a feeling of intense hostility on the part of the tribes between Korti and Abu Hamad."—(*Times*, March 2nd.)

"The weather at Korti is becoming hotter and hotter, and several cases of typhoid have already occurred."

"Lord Wolseley's eyes have been affected by the climate of the Soudan."—(*Standard*, March 3rd):

and, whether, in view of the great losses which must necessarily occur when the real hot weather shortly sets in, Her Majesty's Government will consider the expediency of bringing the troops back by water in comparative comfort without delay, and dealing with the Mahdi by peace or by war at a more convenient season?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: We have no information to the effect that the so-called friendly tribes are rapidly becoming very unfriendly, although Lord Wolseley has intimated that there is some doubt as to the disposition of the tribe of which Hussein Pasha Kalifa was Chief. Lord Wolseley said that Chief was in the Mahdi's camp; and it would be unwise, in those circumstances, to rely upon them. We have no confirmation of the report that the destruction of property by British troops has excited a feeling of intense hostility on the part of the tribes between Korti and Abu Hamad. As to the statement that the weather at Korti is becoming hotter and hotter, and several cases of typhoid have already occurred, we have received no report to that effect. In fact, almost all the sickness that has taken place for a considerable time past has consisted of cases of enteric fever; but we have not heard that the prevalence of that complaint has recently increased. We have received no report as to the alleged statement as to Lord Wolseley's eyes being affected by the climate of the Soudan; and, in regard to the last part of the Question, for reasons stated more fully in the recent debate, Her Majesty's Government do not think it would be expedient to bring back the troops by water from the positions they now occupy.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether it was the case that the British Authorities had furnished the tribe specifically alluded to by the noble Marquess with 1,000 rifles?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: That may have been done some time ago. I have no recollection of the matter having occurred recently.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BUSINESS—RAILWAY RATES AND CHARGES BILLS.

MR. R. H. PAGET asked the Chairman of Ways and Means, Whether he has had under his consideration the Bills promoted by nine of the principal Railway Companies, proposing important changes in the incidence of Railway Rates, which are exciting public attention throughout the Country; and, whether he will, in concert with the promoters and opponents of these Bills, fix a day, as soon as practicable, when these important Bills may be fully discussed on Second Reading?

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY: The Bills to which the hon. Gentleman refers have been brought to my notice here, and I have received several communications relating to them which show the great interest and importance attached to them elsewhere. The practice of the House with regard to such Bills is as follows:—When Bills promoted by a Company already constituted by Act of Parliament have been read a first time they are referred to the Examiners, under Standing Order 62, who report to the House that the requirements of the Standing Order relating to the Wharncliffe meeting have been complied with or otherwise. In the event of non-compliance, the question is referred to the Committee on Standing Orders. Under Standing Order 204, the Bill must be read a second time not later than seven clear days after the Report of the Examiner or of the Committee on Standing Orders, as the case may be. There is, however, no rule fixing the time for the Examiner to hold his inquiry, and, in fact, it depends entirely on the notice he receives from the promoters requesting him to hold it. Under these circumstances, it is not in my power to suggest any day for the second reading of these Bills; but I am of opinion that it is very desirable they should all be discussed together, in order to save the time of the House. The same principle, practically, is involved, and the judgment of the House would, I apprehend, govern the

others. There is no doubt that the importance of these Bills requires that ample Notice should be given of the time fixed or their discussion, and I will communicate with the agents for the Bills with a view to insure this being done.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN,—THE SUAKIN-BERBER EXPEDITION.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, since the advance of British Troops by the Nile towards Berber is now stopped, he will also stop any infructuous advance on the Red Sea side, except such as may be possible before the greatest heat, and without undue risk, to facilitate the retirement of the garrison of Kassala; and, if that garrison cannot be relieved on such conditions, whether they will be immediately informed that they had better come to terms with their co-religionists and countrymen?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, he had no reason to think that General Graham or Lord Wolseley, under whose general orders General Graham was placed, would be disposed to make any advance during the hot weather. The campaign under Sir Gerald Graham would, no doubt, be governed by the conditions of climate and by other considerations referred to in the Question.

In reply to a further Question by Sir George Campbell,

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, he had no doubt that if General Graham found it was possible for him to do anything to facilitate the relief of the garrison of Kassala he would do so; but he did not imagine that it would be possible for General Graham on his arrival to make any movement in that direction.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked, whether the Government adhered to the statement, which was practically a death warrant, that Kassala was outside the sphere of British operations, or whether they would make some statement to counteract the impression which had been created?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that Kassala was the subject of the next Question to which his noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would reply.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN,—KASSALA.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is a fact that the operations of Major Chermside for procuring relief for the garrison of Kassala are seriously impeded by the occupation of Massowah by Italian troops; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will take any steps to persuade the Italian Government themselves to undertake the relief of that beleaguered town?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have received no information of the nature suggested in the first portion of the hon. Baronet's Question. The Italian Government are in possession of all the particulars known with regard to the condition of the garrison of Kassala, and Her Majesty's Government must leave to them the decision as to the steps which they may consider it advisable to take.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT gave Notice that, on the first opportunity, he should call attention to the abandonment of the garrison of Kassala.

Mr. O'KELLY said, he would suggest that the Government should learn whether it was possible to send information to the Commander of the troops at Kassala to surrender when he could get terms from the Mahdi.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked as to the possibility of the garrison retiring to the Abyssinian frontier?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he must refer the hon. Member to his statement on the subject made in the recent debate.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—"THE QUEEN *v.* RYAN"—KILRUSH QUARTER SESSIONS.

Mr. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the attention of the Irish Government has been called to an incident at the Kilrush, county Clare, Quarter Sessions, on the 2nd January last, as follows: In the case of The Queen v. Ryan (for larceny; the Defendant pleaded "not guilty." The long panel was called and a jury empanelled, case tried, and jury discharged on disagreement. Immediately after, the County Court Judge resumed the cases of action in Civil Bill

Court, when a litigated case of O'Brien v. M'Grath was called on. One of the witnesses for Defendant was John Griffin, of Querrin, a farmer, and one of the jurors who served in the case of The Queen v. Ryan. Immediately after he gave his evidence in the civil case the County Court Judge, addressing him, said "Come now, tell me, were you not a juror in Ryan's case, just tried?" —Answer: "I was, Sir;" Judge: "Were you for convicting or acquitting him?"—Answer: "I was for letting him free;" if, in questioning a juror with regard to what transpired in the jury room, Mr. Kelly did not exceed his right; if it is not a fact that, upon at least one previous occasion, the Lords Justices have called upon Mr. Kelly for an explanation of his conduct as Judge; and, if in this instance similar inquiry will be made, in order to stop a dangerous and unconstitutional proceeding?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This Question has been referred to the County Court Judge for his observations, and he writes as follows:—

"Sir,—In reply to your letter of yesterday, I beg to state that I did substantially ask the question referred to in the Parliamentary Notice of which you enclosed me a copy. I did so not seriously, nor with the view of requiring any answer. The witness, to the amusement of the crowd in Court, immediately replied that he did not know the meaning of the words 'acquittal' or 'conviction,' but that 'he was for setting the man free.'

"The question and answer had no bearing or effect upon the result of either the criminal case in which Griffin was a juror or of the civil case in which he was a witness."

It would have been better if this incident had not occurred; but I think it may not unreasonably be regarded as a jocular interlude, in an unguarded moment, between the Judge and the witness, and that it is not a matter in which the Executive can further interfere.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ARKLOW HARBOUR.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, What is the amount of the contract for the construction of the Arklow Harbour works; what will be the extra cost of repairing the foundations of the breakwater that have given way; will such extra cost fall either in whole or in part on the local rates, or will it be met by Treasury disbursements; and, will the Treasury send some independent engineer, not connected with the Board of Works, to examine the condition of the breakwater, and Report upon the extent and nature of the injury?

MR. HIBBERT: The amount of the contract is £27,891, towards which a free grant of £15,000 will be made. It is not possible yet, owing to the weather, to say what extra cost there will be, but it is expected to be small. Any excess over the estimate will be met by loan, in accordance with the Act. The Treasury are not prepared to send another engineer to the spot, as it would involve extra expenses; but I will call for a special Report as to the state of the foundations.

CUSTOMS ANNUITY AND BENEVOLENT FUND.

MR. DAWSON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the Customs Annuity and Benevolent Fund was established for the benefit of the widows and children of Her Majesty's Customs; whether the directors of the Customs Fund, with the consent of the Treasury, purchased the patent of an office called the Clerkship of the Bills of Entry; whether the patent was renewed on certain conditions in 1846; whether the profits applicable to the charity had not then reached from £8,000 to £10,000 per annum; whether the Lords of the Treasury, in 1881, took away the entire business without giving any compensation to the Benevolent Fund, on which depends the welfare of the future widows and officers of fifteen hundred insurers; and, whether the Government proposes to compensate the charity for this great loss?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the facts of the case are as follows:—In 1817, the Directors of the Customs Annuity and Benevolent Fund purchased, for an annual payment of £2,000, the interest of the Lewis family in the Patent under which they held the office of the "Clerk of the Bills of the Customs," or "Bill of Entry," as it afterwards came to be called, the Patent being renewed to them for 31 years. In 1848, the Patent was again renewed on certain conditions—for instance, a reduction in the price at which the publication was sold—for a further period of 31 years. In 1879, the renewed

Patent lapsed, and all rights under it were extinguished. Her Majesty's then Government had meanwhile appointed a Committee to inquire into the whole matter, and they refused to renew the Patent, not considering it right that their servants should make a profit out of the sale of Government information. The clerks employed on the "Bill of Entry" work were offered the option of continuing their employment on behalf of the Government, who henceforth intended themselves to issue the "Bill of Entry," and they accepted the terms offered to them. I cannot admit that the participators in the funds have any claim whatever to compensation. They purchased the remainder of the Patent, as they might have purchased the remainder of a lease; and the figures quoted by the hon. Member, which I have no reason to question, show how good a bargain they made for themselves. I see no object in going back on the work of former years with the object of renewing objectionable monopolies of this character, which, however consonant with former ideas, are altogether opposed to our present financial practice.

Mr. DAWSON: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman, is it a fact that the Government not only did not renew the right, but allowed it to lapse? Whether the Government, after taking advantage of all the time this Company worked, had followed this up by getting all their books and papers when it was a going concern of considerable property?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, he had no further information on the subject.

IRELAND—THE VICEREGAL COURT—THE GENTLEMAN USHER TO THE LORD LIEUTENANT.

Mr. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the Hon. Gaston W. Monsell, Gentleman Usher to the Lord Lieutenant, refused to fulfil his official functions at the State Ball held in Dublin Castle on the day of the death of the late Cardinal M'Cabe?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; it is not a fact.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: In connection with this Question, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman, if he will be good enough to state what are the particular functions of a Gentleman Usher?

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MERCHANT SHIPPING—THE TRANSPORT SERVICE.

Mr. DEASY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he has received offers of steamers from Irish Shipowners for transport purposes on as favourable terms as from English Shipowners; and, whether any Irish ships have been engaged; and, if not, on what grounds?

Mr. CAINE (for Sir Thomas Brassey): Offers have been received within the last few days from the owners of upwards of 900 steamers, with, for the most part, nothing to indicate the nationality of the owners, that not being a point to which the attention of the Board is directed. The only stipulation required is, that the owner of the ship used in transport shall be a British subject. Of the ships taken, two—the *Dunluce* and the *Camel*—belong to the Port of Belfast. Two others belonging to the Port of Sunderland, and one belonging to the Port of Liverpool, are, I think, the property of Irish owners.

Mr. DEASY: I will ask the hon. Gentleman, if he will draw their attention to the point?

Mr. CAINE: The Admiralty will consider which are the fittest ships for the purpose for which they intend them.

ARMY—THE MARINE ARTILLERY AND INFANTRY.

Viscount LEWISHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can state the reason why not a single Officer of the Marine Artillery or Infantry has been appointed to the general staff of the force under General Graham, although that force has held Suakin for more than a year?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The Military Authorities are not agreed as to what are the qualifications necessary in an officer of the Royal Marines; but General Graham will be authorized to select such officers at present serving at Suakin as he may think right.

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND)—MONOLITHIC PIERS AND BREAKWATERS.

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, In what in-

stances the Board of Works (Ireland) have used the monolithic system in the construction of piers and breakwaters; have they refused to do so for the proposed pier at Tramore, county Waterford, though suggested by an eminent local engineer; was the engineer in chief of the Board of Works examined as to the merits of the monolithic system, and is he in favour of it; and, is it a fact that, in the case of the works proceeding at Kinsale Harbour, it is intended to use concrete blocks, laying them down on their narrow sides or ends on mud of from 15 to 20 feet in depth?

MR. HIBBERT: The Board of Works use the monolithic system in all cases where it is applicable, being themselves in favour of it, as is also their engineer. The Board have not refused to use that system at Tramore; and as regards Kinsale, the use of concrete blocks is an improvement on the original design, which was for a dry rubble work. The foundation there is believed to be quite secure.

MR. DEASY: Would the hon. Gentleman state, if it is a fact that the Government Inspector stated before a Select Committee that the harbour was not worth anything on account of the bad foundation?

MR. HIBBERT: I must ask the hon. Member to put down his Question on the Paper.

CUSTOMS PROMOTION AT LIVERPOOL.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, How it is that no promotion has been made in Liverpool, during the past fifteen months, from the ranks of the Acting Examining Officers, to the situation of Examining Officer of Customs; and, whether there is a Treasury Minute in force providing that promotions to the higher rank should be equally divided between the Acting Examining Officers and candidates by competition?

MR. HIBBERT: Three outdoor officers at Liverpool, approved to act as examining officers, have been promoted to be examining officers during the last 15 months, two by competition and one by selection. The rule is that vacancies in this rank are to be filled up from the grades of assistant examining officer, principal coast officer, outdoor officer, and boatman, equally by selection and by competition, and this rule is duly observed.

CORPORATION OF LONDON TOWER BRIDGE BILL.

MR. BRODRICK asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been drawn to the Corporation of London Tower Bridge Bill, and to the fact that the centre line of the proposed bridge, as shown by the deposited plan and sections, intersects the precincts of the Tower of London; and, whether the promoters of the Bill have yet applied for and obtained any sanction for such interference, or for the erection of the bridge, in such close proximity to the fortress?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: My attention has been drawn to the interference by the proposed bridge with the Tower precincts, and I have called upon the promoters to submit revised plans.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, in reference to the construction of the proposed railway from Suakin to Berber, Whether he will consider the advisability of furnishing special instructions to the officers deputed to superintend the construction, and to the contractors engaged on the work, to the effect that the tribesmen and natives should, as far as practicable, be employed in making the railway, and that pains be taken to circulate amongst them liberal offers, and to afford to them good treatment and acceptable remuneration for their services, so as to convert them, under British protection, from fanatical enemies to interested friends and allies?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: During the past year every effort has been made to induce the Natives and tribesmen of the territories adjoining Suakin to take employment under the British authorities. The same policy will, I have no doubt, be pursued in the construction of the railway.

NAVY—PENSIONS—PETTY OFFICERS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is intended to give to the executive Chief Petty Officers of the Royal Navy a pension based on the rank they hold,

their present pension being that of a rank one grade lower in the service?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: The chief petty officers are a mostvaluable class; but the Admiralty do not feel justified in increasing the present scale of pension.

ISLANDS OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC—THE NEW HEBRIDES, SAMOA, AND TONGA—SURRENDER OF BRITISH RIGHTS.

Mr. GORST asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, having regard to the diplomatic engagement formerly made with France not to occupy the New Hebrides, to Mr. Meade's suggestion at Berlin that France should be allowed to take the New Hebrides, and to the diplomatic engagements recently made with Germany not to assume sovereignty over the North Coast of New Guinea, and not to occupy Samoa or Tonga, he will give a pledge that Her Majesty's Government will not surrender any more British rights in the Pacific Ocean until the Colonial governments interested and the British Parliament have had the opportunity of fully considering the interests of the British Empire in the Pacific?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The Question of the hon. and learned Gentleman rests upon certain assumptions which are set forth in the Preamble, and to which we are not able to accede. For example, with respect to the New Hebrides, our statement is this—that the engagement with France to maintain the neutrality of the New Hebrides continues in force, and that there has been no proposal that France should assume the Sovereignty of the New Hebrides, unless on terms satisfactory to the Australian Colonies. So far for the New Hebrides. As regards New Guinea, again, we think that the hon. and learned Gentleman has been inaccurately informed. There has been no such diplomatic engagements with Germany as to New Guinea as he supposes, and a telegram shows that the German annexation of New Guinea has not been made in any way by concert with the Government of this country, and not, therefore, by any surrender of any right on the part of this country. Then, again, with regard to Samoa and Tonga, I believe the fact is this—that Germany has fully maintained its engagement not to occupy Samoa or Tonga, and the German Government itself has expressly disowned the course taken by the German Consul in Samoa in hoisting the German flag there. There are statements to which references to Papers could be supplied to the hon. and learned Gentleman if he desires it; but that being so, we cannot allow that any British rights have been surrendered, and the Question of the hon. and learned Gentleman falls to the ground.

EGYPT—PRINCE BISMARCK'S SPEECH IN THE REICHSTAG.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the report of a speech delivered in the Reichstag by Prince Bismarck, as reported in *The Times* of the 4th March, in which he says, in reference to Egypt—

"I therefore did not advise England 'to take it,' but, on the contrary, dissuaded her from annexing it as urgently as was possible in my disinterested position;"

and, how far Her Majesty's Government can reconcile this declaration with a statement made elsewhere by Lord Granville, to the effect that—

"The policy of the Government has never yet been in accord with the advice with regard to Egypt which he (Prince Bismarck) gave to the late Government and ourselves, namely to take it?"

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Gentleman asks me to reconcile a statement made by Earl Granville with a speech of Prince Bismarck reported yesterday, they appearing not to be in harmony one with the other. My impressions upon the matter had been the same as those of my noble Friend; but I think my hon. Friend will agree with me I had better not enter upon the subject at present, as I do not think any public advantage will arise from it, and I have reason to believe that my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will, in his place in the other House, make a statement upon the subject shortly.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER.

Mr. ONSLOW asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he could state to the House the precise determination arrived at by Her Majesty's Government regarding the Afghan frontier: what is the present position of Sir P. Lumsden's Mission, and how long it is proposed to

keep him on the borders of Afghanistan, and for what purpose; and, if he can now state the purport of the visit of the Amir to His Excellency the Viceroy; on what basis any understanding respecting the relative positions of England, Russia, and Afghanistan on the Afghan frontier is to be framed?

MR. HENEAGE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it may not be highly prejudicial to the maintenance of a good understanding between England and Russia for questions to be asked in this House in relation to Afghanistan at a time when the diplomatic relations between the two Countries are exceeding strained, and when answers to questions are likely to be misinterpreted either as a sign of weakness or a sign of menace?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the important letter from *The Times* Correspondent with Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission in Afghanistan, which appeared in that paper on the 3rd March, and especially to the following extracts:—

"I have pointed out the great strategical importance of Pul-i-Khatum, a place which has always been considered Afghan, and beyond the pale of discussion. Another important position is Penjdeh, in the valley of the Murghab. Its inhabitants have always been subject to Afghanistan, and it is occupied by an Afghan garrison. Russia does not desire the definition of the Afghan frontier, for it will put an end to her successful system of stealthy encroachment. . . . Three years ago the nearest Russian outposts on the road from the Caspian were at Krasnovodsk and Chikishlar, 700 miles from Herat: now they are at Pul-i-Khatum, only 150 miles from Herat. Three years ago the nearest Russian outposts on the road from the Oxus and Merv were at Katra Kurghan, say 500 miles from Herat. now they are at Zotatan, 140 miles from Herat. Nearly all this progress has been made by unopposed encroachments since we evacuated Kandahar:"

whether it is true that the Russian troops have just occupied Zulfagar, 40 miles south of Pul-i-Khatun, and Penjdeh all three places being on Afghan territory; and, whether Her Majesty's Ministers intend to protect the absolute integrity of all Afghan territory, including these important positions, from Russian occupation and influence, in accordance with their own pledges and those of the Czar's Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: What I have to say upon these Questions is this—I will first take the Question of my hon. Friend (Mr. Heneage), and I wish to speak explicity to the House. On the part of Her Majesty's Government I am bound to say that, at the present moment, Questions relating to policy or to future contingencies on the subject of the Afghan Frontier cannot, in our judgment, be answered without prejudice to the public interest. I will state certain reasons why I think that to be plainly the case. The policy to be pursued in relation to the Afghan Frontier has long, in my opinion, been known to be a policy strictly national, having the assent of the country at large, well known to Parliament, stated in Parliamentary Papers and documents which are before it, and known also to be a policy upon which there is a general—I may say, perhaps, an unanimous—accord. The putting of any Question in relation to this policy and to contingencies in connection with it is, I think, to be deprecated, and I may, perhaps, add that the manner in which answers to these Questions are frequently received in some parts of the House, tends to break down the conviction that this country in regard to the Afghan Frontier is a perfectly united country, and to propagate and foster an opposite and very injurious feeling that there are differences of opinion about it, and that the matter is one of Party contention. Without going into other reasons, I think the House will appreciate that which I have mentioned. I do hope that reserve will be exercised by hon. Gentlemen upon this subject, and that they will not put Questions except as to matters of fact. I may almost venture to say once for all—I do not say with absolutely no exception—that it will be the duty of the Government to confine themselves to matters of fact in dealing with the matter. This is my general answer to my hon. Friend behind me (Mr. Heneage). With reference to the expression he has used, implying that there are strained relations between this country and Russia, it is one which I do not at all desire or think it necessary to adopt. Upon the general grounds of which I have spoken, having regard to the nature of the case—which is evidently one of the utmost importance—and at the same time considering the circumstances of distance and of doubt as to particular points of detail, and the fact that this is a matter of great delicacy, in which it

is much more easy to do mischief than good, I do hope that hon. Members will not press upon me Questions which relate strictly and entirely to matters of policy. That applies to the two Questions of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Onslow), and also to the Question of the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) as regards the latter part of it. With regard to the former part, which relates to matters of fact, I believe they are matters upon which full information has already been given in this House. If the hon. Member desires that it should be enlarged as to matters of fact, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will be ready to give him any information he desires.

MR. ONSLOW said, he thought it would be desirable that the House and the country should know what was the national policy to which the right hon. Gentleman referred, and whether it was the determination of the Government to abide by it.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he did not propose to press his Question; but he would remind the House that when the other day he put the last part of the Question, the right hon. Gentleman had asked him to put it on the Paper.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it would be interesting to know whether the Ameer and the majority of the people of Afghanistan cordially endorsed our policy; or, might he ask the right hon. Gentleman, in regard to the policy which he had described as a national policy, Whether Her Majesty's Government has any good ground for supposing that the views of the Ameer of Afghanistan are cordially shared by the majority of the inhabitants of Afghanistan; and, whether it is the fact that many Afghans have expressed themselves as only too willing to become brethren in arms with the Cossacks?

[No reply.]

TOWN TENANCIES IRELAND.—TENANTS' IMPROVEMENTS.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been called to the fact that on Tuesday thirty-two out of the thirty-four Irish Members present voted for a Parliamentary inquiry into the system under which the improvements of tenants in town houses are dealt with in Ireland; and, if he cannot permit a Parliamentary inquiry, will he appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into this question?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he was aware that a very large majority of the Irish Members present in the House voted for the inquiry into house tenure in towns. He was one of those desirous of giving every possible weight to the authority of Irish Members, if the question were one sufficiently and exclusively Irish; but it was proposed to appoint a Select Committee—without the alternative of a Royal Commission— to inquire into the system under which the improvements of tenants in town houses were dealt with in Ireland. That was a very different question from the town parks question, which, at the time of the discussion on the Irish Land Bill, they were disposed to admit was a fair matter for consideration, as to which his right hon. Friend behind him (Mr. W. E. Forster) did say that the Government might assent to inquiry. The town parks question could be considered an Irish question in some degree; and his hon. Friend the Member for Tyrone had made a suggestion which the Government were perfectly willing to agree to—namely, that, so far as town parks were concerned, an inquiry might be made. The question of the tenure of houses in towns was not alone an Irish question. Town houses existed in England and Scotland in exactly the same manner as in Ireland; and he was really not aware of anything distinct in the law of Ireland relating to town houses. It was quite evident that the question was not an Irish, but an Imperial question. He was therefore not able to agree with the desire of the Irish Members to have an inquiry into the tenure of town houses, on the ground on which it was asked for.

THE ESTIMATES—INCREASE OF THE ARMY.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: I wish to ask the Secretary of State for War a Question with regard to the proposed increase of the Army. I see in *The Times* to-day that the Army is to be increased by 15,000 men. I should like to know, Whether that statement in regard to an addition of 15,000 men is a correct statement; and, whether that is in addition to the proposed

increase of 3,000 men, which is the figure stated in the Estimates?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that when he laid on the Table the Vote of Credit for the operations in progress in Egypt and the Soudan, it would be necessary to ask for a number of men in addition to those asked for in the Supplementary Estimates. He was not, however, now prepared to say what that additional number of men would be.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the noble Marquess when the Supplementary Estimates and the Vote of Credit would be brought forward?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he could not state with certainty. He believed it would be necessary to go on with Supply on Monday and Thursday; but it would depend upon the progress that was made. The Army Estimate would be taken after the Navy Estimate was disposed of. The Vote of Credit had not been prepared yet.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE asked the Prime Minister, whether the Vote of Credit would be taken before the end of the financial year?

MR. GLADSTONE said, that it was not the intention to take the Vote in the present financial year.

ARMY—THE FORCE IN IRELAND.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Might I ask the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to reduce the garrison now in Ireland, by sending from it troops to the war in the Soudan? If so, how many troops is it intended to take; and, when is it intended to take them?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: There is no such intention. The number of troops in Ireland was slightly reduced some time ago, and it is not the intention of Her Majesty's Government to reduce it further.

ARMY ESTIMATES—THE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON asked, Whether any Supplementary Army Estimate for the present year would be presented in addition to that already on the Table of the House? He did not see any Vote for the extra 3,000 men for the present year.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, there would be none.

COLONEL STANLEY asked, whether a portion of the charge for the 3,000 men asked for since the Supplementary Estimates were laid on the Table would be included in those Estimates?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, there would be no further demand for money, as the 3,000 men would be included in the Supplementary Estimates.

PUBLIC MEETINGS—THE RIOT AT ASTON HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER: I wish to ask your ruling, Sir, upon a point of Order arising out of an answer given by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. The point is, Whether a Member of the House is not, by the understood Rules of the House, compelled to withdraw any statement made in the House, when that statement has been proved in a Court of Justice to be a scandalous and malicious libel?

MR. SPEAKER: No case has arisen on the facts stated by the hon. Baronet for any interference of the Chair.

REGISTRATION (OCCUPATION VOTERS) BILLS.

MR. HEALY asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will consider the expediency of not making the Irish Registration Bill a separate measure from that for England; but, as in the case of the Franchise and Redistribution Bills, will introduce one measure for the Three Kingdoms?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, it would not be necessary to have a Bill of the same character for England as for Ireland. It was thought advisable that there should be three separate Bills for the three countries. He could assure the hon. and learned Member that the Government felt the obligation of carrying the measures for Ireland and Scotland quite as much as for England.

MR. HEALY: The hon. and learned Gentleman is aware that the House of Lords has three times in succession rejected the Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill; and, of course, if it is brought in now in a separate form, they will reject it a fourth time, and the only protection is to bring it in as a part of the English Bill.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, the Bill that was thrown out was a Bill proposing to alter the law. There was no intention in the present Bill to alter the law with respect to the general rules of registration. Its only object was to apply the rules of borough registration to the county registration.

Mr. DAWSON: Did the hon. and learned Gentleman say that the Registration Bill for Ireland is not intended to alter the law?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): To alter it in one sense. What we are seeking to do is to apply the rules of borough registration to the county registration, and that is the only object. So far as that alteration is needed, we undertake that it shall be applied to Ireland as well as to England and Scotland.

Mr. DAWSON: Might I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, are we to understand that he is not going to introduce now a separate Bill for the reformation of the registration in Ireland?

Mr. CALLAN: Might I ask if the law as it at present exists with regard to borough and county representation is not precisely similar?

[No replies.]

Mr. CRAIG-SELLAR asked when the Government would introduce the Scotch Registration Bill?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour), in reply, said, it was their intention in this Bill to take some opportunity of improving the form of the Valuation Roll, and he was in communication with some of the leading assessors on this subject.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—NAVY SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY, in moving—

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £330,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray additional Expenditure for certain Navy Services arising out of the Military Operations in Egypt, and connected with Shipbuilding in Her Majesty's Dockyards, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885."

said: Sir Arthur Otway, before this Vote is put, it may, perhaps, be for the convenience of the Committee that I should offer a few words of explanation. The first two items included in this Supplementary Estimate provide for the pay and victuals and the number of officers and men which are now overborne. There has been an increase in the number of officers on full pay of about 120. That increase has been necessary, partly on account of the military operations in Egypt, and partly in consequence of the increase in the Naval Force in the Red Sea. The number of seamen overborne, partly owing to the same causes, is 330. We have also to provide for a larger force of Marines, the number overborne being 170. Recruiting has been going on briskly and most satisfactorily for the battalions now serving in Egypt, and there is an excess of 920 boys over the number voted. In recent years it has been found that the number of boys in training has been insufficient to maintain the necessary strength in the blue-jacket classes, and we shall be obliged to propose a considerable increase in the number of boys in the Estimate for next year. When the House, in December, sanctioned an increased expenditure, it was understood that in the Dockyards we should do all that was in our power to hasten shipbuilding, without materially increasing the number of men. A scheme of profitable overtime has been recommended by the officers of the Dockyards, which scheme has been approved by the Admiralty. It will involve an extra sum for wages of about £38,000 for the Home Yards, and £9,000 for the Foreign Yards, chiefly in respect of the valuable Yard at Malta. It is not necessary to ask Parliament for the full sum involved in this increased expenditure, for the reason that we have been unable to expend, under Vote 10, Section 2, the entire sum voted last year for gunnery in consequence of the delay in the delivery of the gun-mountings. A less sum has also been required than was estimated for repairs and alterations of ships. I regret extremely the delay in the delivery of the gun mountings. We have pressed Messrs. Armstrong to use all possible despatch; but in consequence of the difficulties inseparable from the introduction of new patterns, some portion of the payments anticipated this year will be necessarily post-

poned until the next financial year. The Vote of £30,000 for Stores is the necessary consequence of the increased amount of shipbuilding. We have devoted the increased expenditure in stores and shipbuilding and wages more particularly to pushing forward those iron-clads which are now in the most advanced stage; and we hope in the present financial year to complete the *Colossus*, and in the next financial year the *Collingwood*, the *Edinburgh*, the *Warspite*, and the *Impérieuse*. The larger portion of this Supplementary Vote may be described as being entirely in connection with the Egyptian Expedition. A sum of £250,000 for transport is an addition to a sum of £170,000 which has been provided in previous Supplementary Estimates, and it is exclusive of the repayment to the Indian Revenue for the transport of the Indian Contingent. That payment cannot be made in the present financial year. The list of ships which have been engaged for the transport of the Egyptian Expedition is distributed as follows:—Troops and horses, 13 ships, one hospital ship, five condensing ships, five tank ships, seven for camels and mules, 25 for railway material, including the *employés* on the railway, nine for stores, one ice ship, two colliers, and two tugs. The approximate cost averages 17*s.* 6*d.* per ton per month for the troop-ships, and from 11*s.* to 12*s.* for the cargo vessels. I believe that these rates are quite unprecedented in the experience of the Admiralty. At the time of the Crimean War, the rate was 45*s.* to 50*s.* for vessels affording very inferior accommodation; and for the ships taken for the last Expedition to Egypt we paid 30 per cent higher rates than those which we are paying at the present time. I am sure the Committee will be glad to be assured that every care has been taken to provide for the requirements of the gallant men we have despatched on the Expedition to Egypt. The *Ganges*, one of the finest vessels in the Peninsular and Oriental Company's Service has been taken as a hospital ship, and has been most carefully fitted up. The condensing arrangements at Suakin will be capable of furnishing 1,200 tons of fresh water per day. We have now at Suakin two or three ships with ice-making machinery. In addition, we are despatching one small refrigerating vessel with a cargo of 400 tons of ice to be kept frozen. By these arrangements we propose to keep up a supply of ice, not only to those for whom it is so essential—namely, the sick; but we hope also that there may be some to spare for the troops generally. With these observations, I beg to move the Vote for the additional Expenditure for Navy Services arising out of the Military Operations in connection with the Egyptian Campaign, and for Shipbuilding in Her Majesty's Dockyards.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary Sum, not exceeding £330,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray additional Expenditure for certain Navy Services arising out of the Military Operations in Egypt, and connected with Shipbuilding in Her Majesty's Dockyards, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885."—(*Sir Thomas Brassey.*)

MR. W. H. SMITH: I do not propose, Sir Arthur Otway, to find any fault whatever with the provision which the hon. Gentleman seeks to make for seamen and Marines, for the victualling and clothing of the seamen and Marines, for the transport expenses, and for the other services included in the Vote; but I cannot help expressing my very great sorrow that my hon. Friend has had again to announce the further postponement of the completion of those ships which the House so earnestly desires. The hon. Gentleman has been obliged to tell us that while a larger sum has been expended in wages in the Dockyards and in stores for building ships, there is a delay in the furnishing of the gun-mountings, which places in the hands of the Department something like £40,000. Hon. Members who are acquainted with the working of the Department will know what that means. A delay in the delivery of gun-mountings to the extent of £40,000 means that the ships for which the gun-mountings are required are incomplete, and are not able to take the sea until they are provided. Therefore, there is to be a further unexpected delay, which certainly comes upon the House by surprise.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The saving upon gun-mountings does not cover the whole sum of £40,000. The actual saving on gun-mountings alone is £19,000.

MR. W. H. SMITH: My impression was that the gun-mountings covered the

whole saving. I presume that the statement of the hon. Gentleman relates to Sub-Section 2 of Vote 10—the Vote under the head of Machinery.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: There is also a saving of £18,000 on the repairs and alterations of ships; and the two items together come to about £40,000.

MR. W. H. SMITH: At all events, we have an intimation conveyed to the House that the gun-mountings necessary for the guns in order to enable the ships to take the sea have not been supplied; and, therefore, the ships on which the country was entitled to rely, and on which it thought it could rely, cannot be available for the service of the country. These ships were promised to be in readiness and efficient at a certain date; and as they are not, it shows that sufficient foresight has not been exercised, and sufficient care taken to secure that, as far as the Admiralty were concerned, the promise made to the House should be fulfilled. The hon. Gentleman has stated that the *Collingwood*, the *Edinburgh*, the *Warspite*, the *Impérieuse*, and the *Colossus*, will be delivered in the course of the coming financial year. I am sure that the House will receive that statement with satisfaction. But I would ask my hon. Friend if he is quite certain that the guns and mountings will be ready for them in time? From the information which has been furnished to the House I very much doubt whether the guns and mountings will be ready in the coming financial year. I hold that there is no security whatever that the guns and gun-mountings will be in the possession of the Admiralty when required. And now I cannot help referring to what is not in the Estimate as well as what is. On the 23rd of October, Parliament was informed that the Admiralty had carefully considered the whole position of the naval defences of the country, and that the Government would make a statement to the House in the course of the month of November. I think the inference to be drawn from that was that the Government had fully considered the whole subject, and had made up their minds as to the course it was necessary to take, and the additions that were necessary to be made to the Navy in order to provide additional strength. If they did not contemplate an addition to the strength of the Navy, at all events they had made up their minds as to what they did intend to do. Well, November passed, and on the 2nd of December a statement was made in this House which led us to believe that a large addition would be made to the strength of the Navy. But up to the present moment not a single ship has been ordered. Four months of the financial year have elapsed, and nothing of the kind has been done.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Six *Scouts* have been ordered.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Well, I am very glad to hear that. I was only, however, repeating the information given by my hon. Friend to the House in answer to a Question. I understood him to say that the tenders would not be dealt with until the 6th of March.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Six have already been ordered.

MR. W. H. SMITH: The answer which I obtained to a Question the other day was that no one ship had been ordered. At all events, there is no provision in these Estimates, nor has any been made in the course of this financial year, for payment to any contractor of a single farthing for the building of a single ton. The position I wish to take is this—that the Government ought to realize the necessity for this provision, and the sooner it is made the better, in every sense of the word. It does not cost more to build a ship as rapidly as it can be built consistently with good work than to spread the building of it over a long period of years. On the contrary, we have evidence before the House, given before a Committee appointed by the House, including that of Mr. Barnaby, the Chief Constructor of the Navy, that it costs less to build a ship rapidly. Rapid shipbuilding is conducive to greater economy than slow shipbuilding, which involves an unnecessary expenditure of time. Then, again, there is the question of torpedo boats. We were promised that a certain number of torpedo boats should be built within the year. If there is one thing in which this country is more deficient than another at the present moment, as compared with the Navies of other Powers, it is in torpedo boats; and, from what we all know, great reliance in future naval wars will be placed on torpedo boats for the defence of harbours and strong places. But though four months have elapsed since the statement was

made to the House, not one single step appears to have been taken, as far as I can see, to supply this deficiency. I say that good faith has not been kept with the House by the delay which has taken place. For four months no torpedo boat has been ordered, so that there has been the delay of one-third of a year, the information before the House being that a torpedo boat could be built within a year. Yet not one has as yet been commenced.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Ten torpedo boats have been ordered.

MR. W. H. SMITH: No doubt they have now been ordered; but why has such delay occurred? I have only mentioned the matter for the purpose of this discussion; but I take it that five or six *Scouts* and 10 torpedo boats have just been ordered. The impression left on the House by the statements of Ministers in December last was that they were going to deal with this matter promptly, and that their promises would be forthwith fulfilled; but they have not done so. The engagement into which they entered with the House ought to have been carried out forthwith. I make no complaint of the extra iron-clads not having been commenced, for we know that the plans and specifications with regard to iron-clads require very careful consideration and take some time to prepare; but this class—namely, the belted cruisers and the torpedo boats, are all vessels, the types of which have been studied and decided upon, as has already been explained to the House, and I cannot see why there should have been any delay whatever in forthwith giving orders to the contractors to proceed with them as rapidly as possible. We were told by the Admiralty that one of the principal merits of their programme was that, by the nature of the steps they were taking, there would be no delay; that when once a contract was entered into it must go on. With regard to the torpedo rams, the belted cruisers, the vessels of the *Scout* class, and torpedo boats, they were to be built by contract, and would consequently be completed rapidly. I must say that the only interpretation which could be placed on language of this character was that the Government intended to proceed with them rapidly. And they obtained the confidence and approval of the House because the programme was one that could be carried out rapidly, and, therefore, one that would give satisfaction to the House and to the county. On another occasion we were told that the Government intended to ask for tenders from the shipbuilding firms as soon as possible, as every one of the ships, except the torpedoes, would take more than a year to build. Now, would the Peninsular and Oriental Company, or the Royal Mail Packet Company, or any other great shipping concern, after realizing the fact that it was necessary to make an addition to their fleet, consider that an engagement by their Chairman to build certain ships as soon as possible had been complied with by postponing the issue of a tender for four months? Yet that is exactly what Her Majesty's Government have done on the present occasion. After the statement made to the House on the 23rd of October the Government ought to have known they intended to do; and it was not unreasonable to expect that all the drawings and specifications and necessary arrangements would have been made before their statement on the 2nd of December. The day after that approval of the House had been obtained the tenders should have gone out with a request that contractors should state in what time they would be able to complete their contracts. If the Government really realized that these boats were necessary it would have been both economical and sound policy, as well as their duty, to have them completed for sea as soon as possible consistently with good work. I wish again to refer to the information we possess so far as the future is concerned. I should be out of Order if I were now to go into the Estimates for the coming year; but I may say that I notice that no provision is made for several of the ships that were undertaken to be put in hand on the 2nd of last December. I notice also that, as far as the House is aware, no provision is made in the Estimates for the coming year for three out of the 10 *Scouts* that were undertaken in December last to be completed in the course of the year. Instead of building 10 *Scouts* as rapidly as possible, it is now proposed to postpone the building of three of them until after next year. I hope that some explanation will be given to the House of this extraordinary departure from the solemn engagement made with the House, if not now, at all events in

moving the Navy Estimates for the year.

Mr. CARBUTT said, he was glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith had endeavoured to impress upon the Government the necessity of proceeding with the ships with more vigour, and more especially of going on with the torpedo boats, to which they were pledged. He was inclined to believe that in future wars torpedo boats would be quite as useful as line-of-battle ships. He desired, however, in the few words he proposed to say, to refer, not so much to shipbuilding, as to the deplorable condition in which they were in respect of guns. He might state, without fear of contradiction, that they had not one single breech-loading steel gun of large calibre at the present time which had been fired and tested. He, therefore, thought he was justified in saying that they were in a deplorable condition; and if the country were not in the remarkable condition in which it was placed at the present moment, he thought the House ought to insist upon the Government having some proper system upon which the manufacture of guns could be carried on. Recently there had been several instances in which guns had exploded, and they were still going on manufacturing guns, although they could never tell whether the guns, when turned out, would explode or not. Notwithstanding several inquiries no explanation had been forthcoming.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! There is no reference to guns in this Vote, and the hon. Gentleman is out of Order in discussing a subject which will come on for discussion upon a future occasion.

Mr. CARBUTT said, he bowed to the ruling of the hon. Gentleman; but he must remind the hon. Gentleman that he had allowed the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) to enter into the question of guns.

The CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Member for Westminster was in Order in discussing the question of gun-mountings, because there is an item of £30,000 for gun-mountings.

Mr. CARBUTT said, that as the Estimate covered a sum for gun-mountings, if not for the guns themselves, he would be in Order in calling attention to the Question.

The CHAIRMAN: There is nothing whatever in the Vote which touches the question of guns, although there is an item relating to gun-mountings. The hon. Gentleman, therefore, must confine himself to the gun-mountings if he enters on the subject now.

Mr. CARBUTT said, that, in deference to the ruling of the Chairman, he would confine himself to the question of gun-mountings. What he wished to called the attention of the Committee to was the system upon which all these manufactures were carried on. There was not a single responsible head to whom they could go and ask why such a thing had happened, or to give a reason for anything that occurred. If an hon. Member put a Question in the House he only got an evasive answer. He had repeatedly put Questions to the Government, and generally the answer given did not convey the slightest information. For instance, if the Government were asked how far a gun would fire they always gave the estimated, and not the real distance. His objection to the Manufacturing Department was that the gentleman who had charge of it knew nothing whatever of the subject. As a matter of fact, at the present time, the Department intrusted with the manufacture of gun-mountings, and things of that description, were presided over by an Artillery officer, who had no special knowledge of the subject. He had to depend upon some other officer, or foreman, or manager, under him; and he (Mr. Carbutt) maintained that, under such circumstances, the country could not be served with that efficiency which it was entitled to demand. If they were not at the end of the present Parliament—for he presumed that it would end this year—he, for one, would move for the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry into the whole subject. He thought it was a national disaster not to have a Manufacturing Department at the head of which was a man who knew something about guns and the material for making them. As the Chairman had already called him to Order, he did not know that he need go into the question further; but when it came up again on the Vote for guns on another Estimate, he would take the opportunity of returning

to the subject, and entering into it more fully.

SIR JOHN HAY said, he quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman who had just addressed the Committee that there was great inconvenience in discussing gun-mountings now, and having to wait for the Army Estimates before they were able to discuss the guns. He understood that the Army Supplementary Estimates would give an opportunity to the hon. Gentleman to raise the question of the guns on Monday; and he hoped that the hon. Gentleman would bring it forward with all the ability and knowledge he possessed. Various questions were involved in the present Vote, and first of all he would refer to the increase of Marines. His hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty informed the Committee that the Marines were 170 over the proper number, and that an additional sum of money was required in order to make provision for them. He did not see, however, any additional sum of money in the Estimates on the Table for the increase of Marines; and, considering the onerous duties now thrown upon the Corps, he had hoped to find in the Estimates submitted to Parliament some provision for the permanent increase of the Force. He was sorry that the Marines had not been further strengthened, for it was quite certain that the 12,400 men now voted were not sufficient for the purposes to which the Marines were continually applied in South Africa, in North Africa, and in various other parts of the world. They were seasoned and gallant soldiers, who were employed, not only in their own duties at home and on board ship, but in assisting the Army in the discharge of military duties abroad. He was quite certain that everyone who was acquainted with the nature of the duties performed by the Force would agree with him in opinion that it ought to be materially strengthened. He thought he understood his hon. Friend to say that the boys in training were to be increased by 920.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, his statement was that the boys were now overborne by 920.

SIR JOHN HAY presumed that the Vote about to be taken in the Navy Estimates proper would provide for the overborne boys; but he was not certain whether that was so or not, and he was afraid that the number was not quite sufficient for the purpose. A noble Lord in "another place," a Colleague of the present Civil Lord, was reported to have said that the reason why there were so few boys in training was that, although there was an insufficient number, it was in consequence of the deplorable loss of two of their training vessels which occurred some years ago. He was quite sure that it was impossible for the Admiralty to justify the small number of boys now in training by the fact that, four or five years ago, some two vessels were lost. There was an ample number of boys to be obtained, and this was not an adequate defence for the Admiralty for neglecting to increase the number, so that they might be able to keep up a proper supply of men for the Fleet. With regard to the £10,000 to be voted for stores for shipbuilding purposes, he really was astonished to see such a sum proposed by the Admiralty three or four months after their promise that the sum of £5,000,000 or upwards should be expended for increasing the efficiency of the Navy. It was said by the Secretary to the Admiralty, in the Autumn Session, that at least a sum of £5,000,000 was necessary for the proper increase of the Fleet; and he certainly understood the hon. Gentleman to intimate that immediate steps would be taken to apply that money, which the House was quite ready to grant, and to do all in the power of the Admiralty to increase the number of ships, both armour-clad and of all other descriptions. Until this moment they had had no information as to whether anything had been done to carry out that promise; and in the Return which had been laid upon the Table of the House, and delivered that morning, they found that the condition of the armour-clad ships was one that must be extremely unsatisfactory to the country. He found, from the Return which was before the House and in the hands of hon. Members, that the *Collingwood* was not to be completed at Portsmouth until this time next year. The time for the completion of the *Rodney* was "uncertain." The *Impérieuse* would not be finished until January, 1886; the *Warspite* was "uncertain;" and with regard to the ships laid down in 1882, the *Benbow* was not to be put out of the hands of the contractors until July, 1886, and they knew that it was probable that

two years would elapse before she was efficient for the public service. The completion of the *Camperdown*, building at Portsmouth, was "uncertain," and the *Howe*, building at Pembroke, was also "uncertain." Those vessels were laid down in 1881 and 1882. The completion of the only ships laid in 1883—the *Anson* and the *Hero*—was also "uncertain." Those two ships represented ships laid down in 1882-3 and 1883-4. But the Return did not allude to the condition of ships which were in hand in the years 1880 and 1881; and it was worth while for the Committee to consider what chance there was of these ships being completed when it was found that other vessels laid down years before were not yet out of hand, as in the case of the *Ajax*, the *Conqueror*, the *Edinburgh*, and the *Colossus*. Among the new ships which were indicated in the Return, and which were promised in December at Portsmouth and Pembroke, were two new armour-clads whose type was not yet decided; and in regard to new armour-clads which were to have been built by contract, the statement was that they had not yet been ordered. Thus it would appear that the ships that were to have been built in the Royal Yards had not yet had their type decided; while others which were to have been built in private Yards had not yet been ordered. That was certainly not what the House of Commons expected when the promise of the Government was made in December last. It seemed to him that the country was being trifled with in regard to its naval affairs; and he must say that though he had the greatest respect for the gallant Admirals who sat at the Admiralty Board, some of whom were his own personal friends, yet he could not conceive how they could consent to sit at that Board, and allow the country to be trifled with, when they knew the defenceless state they were in both in regard to ships and guns, especially when compared with foreign nations. Other countries were increasing their Fleets with the greatest possible rapidity. He did not forget that the Admiralty, on the 11th of July last, put forward a statement, by the mouth of the First Lord of the Admiralty—that if they were granted £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 to-morrow, for the purpose of increasing the efficiency of the Navy, the great difficulty would be how they would be able to spend the money. That statement was made on the 11th of July, and in October they awoke to the fact that a sum of £5,000,000 was absolutely necessary for our naval defences. In the month of December they promised to spend that sum; but, having made that announcement, they had not, up to the present moment, taken the slightest step to expend the money which Parliament was ready and willing to grant. They came down now with a Supplementary Estimate in advance of the ordinary Estimates of the year, which was totally inadequate for the purposes for which it was required. He had no wish to delay the Business of the Committee, and he thought that the £330,000 now asked for had better be granted, in order that the Admiralty might wake up again from the slumber into which they had fallen since December last. At the same time, he was bound to say that the country ought to know how the Admiralty had neglected the public interests, and if the money were voted care should be taken to see that it was properly spent.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR was understood to express an opinion that, whenever Supplementary Estimates were given to the House, the original Estimates should be combined with them, so that the total amount might be shown for each item. He hoped that the Secretary to the Treasury would see that done in the future. Then the mixing up of various items relating to different matters in one amount was very inconvenient. For instance, the sum required for the construction and completion of the railway in Egypt should have been kept entirely separate and distinct from every other item.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he was not surprised at the protest which the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay) had made in regard to the delay in spending the money which was necessary to maintain the Fleet in a proper state of efficiency. It was quite evident that the country were now paying the cost of the desertion of General Gordon, for it was obvious that the money which would otherwise have been spent on the Navy was now required for other purposes, and that a good deal of it would be wanted for the Soudan Expedition. He

had risen now for the purpose of calling the attention of the Secretary to the Admiralty to certain serious mishaps which had happened in Africa in regard to the working of the Gardner gun at the last serious battle which occurred in the Soudan.

MR. CARBUTT wish to know whether the hon. Member was in Order, seeing that he (Mr. Carbutt) had been ruled out of Order for introducing the question of guns?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the point he wished to raise had reference to gun-making, which he thought would come in under at least three heads of the present Votes. He might add that his remarks on the subject would be very brief.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will be quite out of Order in referring to the Gardner gun.

MR. GORST, on the point of Order, wished to say that his hon. Friend was complaining that a Vote of money would be entirely useless, and that the men and boys, who appeared on the Estimates, were being destroyed by ineffective guns.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not see any connection between the remarks of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) and the point of Order. I still retain my opinion, that any discussion of the Gardner gun, on a Vote in which there is no mention of guns whatever, would be entirely out of Order.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT desired to call the attention of the Chairman to the fact that the Vote was to defray additional expenditure for certain Naval Services arising out of the military operations in Egypt; and Vote 10 referred to naval stores for building and repairs in connection with the Fleet. The gun he wished to call attention to was strictly a naval gun in charge of the Naval Brigade.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have already ruled that the hon. Member is out of Order. This Vote has no connection whatever with guns.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that hon. Gentlemen opposite had complained, as they generally did, that the Estimates were not sufficiently high. He had not risen with any object of that kind. Since his earliest childhood England had had no Navy; but, somehow or other, she seemed to have got on uncommonly well with the ships she had. When right hon. Gentlemen opposite were last in power they obtained a sum of £6,000,000 for the purpose of increasing the efficiency of the Navy; and he believed that what they really did was to provide three ships. He was sorry that the Vote was taken upon two distinct items—namely, the Naval Services arising out of the military operations in Egypt, and the shipbuilding in Her Majesty's Dockyards. He thought it would have been a great deal more convenient if the two items had been kept separate. He must, however, accept the fact that they were not kept separate, but were included in the same Vote. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty had gone through all the different items; and he gathered from the hon. Gentleman's statement that the first and second were really rendered necessary in consequence of the Expedition to Egypt. As the military operations there had necessitated assistance from the Naval Brigade, and the employment of a number of officers and Marines, he would not contest that Vote; but he did contest the sum of £250,000 for conveying troops from this country to Egypt. He gathered from the Secretary to the Admiralty that that was exclusive of any charge for Indian troops; so that this sum of £250,000 was really a charge for the troops which had been conveyed from this country. Probably the Chairman would rule him out of Order if upon this Vote he were to raise the whole of the Egyptian Question; but he would assume that this country was perfectly right in going to Egypt; perfectly right in maintaining troops, and in maintaining order there. That was, the country was told, the reason why they were there; and they were further told that they had the right of adjusting the Southern Frontier of Egypt. But why was this country called upon to defend Egypt, or to adjust the Southern Frontier? The reason was that the Egyptians could not do it themselves. It was all very well for a country to say—"I cannot fight;" but when they asked other nations to come in and fight for them, the least they could do was to pay for the fighting. The House had had many Votes and discussions on this subject, and he had heard very different statements from the Treasury Bench; but he had never yet discovered, ever since these Votes were

first brought forward, why in the name of goodness, admitting that they ought to go to Egypt, when the Egyptians themselves could not maintain their position, and govern their own country, the Egyptians ought not themselves to pay for it. They were told, it was true, that Egypt could not pay the money that was required. But, of course, that was sheer nonsense. So long as they were able to pay their Bonded Debt, and to pay extortionate interest to usurers who called themselves bondholders, so long would they find their Exchequer empty. What would have happened in Egypt if this country had not come forward? Where would the bondholders have been? They would have disappeared entirely.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The financial policy of Egypt is not a subject for discussion under this Vote. The hon. Member is introducing a matter which is not in any way involved in the present Vote.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, the point he desired to raise was that this money ought not to be in the Estimates at all, because it ought to be charged upon the Egyptian Government. The issue he desired to discuss was, whether the Egyptians were not perfectly able to pay the money themselves. He had no wish to go into the whole of the Egyptian Question, and this was the sole point he wished to bring forward. As he thought the Egyptians were able to pay the money, and as we were not bound to pay it, he begged to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £250,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £80,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray additional Expenditure for certain Navy Services arising out of the Military Operations in Egypt, and connected with Shipbuilding in Her Majesty's Dockyards, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, the Committee were very much indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) for having called attention to the discreditable neglect on the part of Her Majesty's Government to fulfil their promises in regard to increasing the efficiency of the Navy. The way in which the Committee was treated by the Government was exemplified by the state of the Treasury Bench at that moment. There was not a single responsible Minister of the Crown upon it—an any rate, no Minister who had a right to advise the Crown in reference to this question. The same delay and the same neglect animated the Government in every respect. When the First Lord of the Admiralty was imperatively called upon to look into the state of the Fleet, he was sent by the Government upon a fruitless mission to Egypt. He (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) wished to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, who always did his best, according to the power given to him, one or two questions in regard to these facts. He wanted to know what had been done in reference to the leading stokers of the Navy, the pensions to wives and orphans of seamen and Marines; and also what steps had been taken to satisfy the representations which had been made from different classes in the Dockyards as to the position they occupied and the treatment they received? More than two years ago the right hon. Gentleman who was now Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) promised that the grievances of different classes of Dockyard *employés* should be carefully looked into. In 1883, certain representations were made which, since then, in almost every instance, had been entirely neglected. The regulations which were recommended in regard to the examinations had been altogether set aside by the Government; and he understood that persons in the Dockyards, who had been compelled to pass a severe examination, found themselves superseded by persons who had passed no examination at all. He certainly felt himself unable to support the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). His regret was, not that it was a Vote of £330,000, but that the sum proposed was not a great deal larger. He hoped before the debate closed that the Secretary to the Admiralty would give a full explanation to his right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) and the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay), and would enable the Committee to go away with the belief that, notwithstanding the absence of these lazy Cabinet Ministers—["Order!"] The hon. Gentleman opposite who called him to Order was not the Chairman, and if he was out of Order he presumed that

the Chairman would correct him. Notwithstanding the absence of all these—he would call them active—Cabinet Ministers, who had brought the Navy of the country into such an inefficient state, he hoped to be assured by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty that the interests of the Navy would be properly regarded in future by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. PULESTON said, he had listened with much pleasure to the excellent speech of the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and he hoped that the Secretary to the Admiralty and other Members of the Government would give some explanation of the present extraordinary position of affairs in reference to the pledges they had given to the House last Autumn. He hoped that explanation would be given now, and that they would not have to wait for it until they reached the ordinary Navy Estimates of the year. It was a matter of congratulation that the Prime Minister himself was present at the early part of the discussion. The right hon. Gentleman must have been startled by the disclosures which had been made by the right hon. Member for Westminster. It must, indeed, have very much surprised the Prime Minister, as it surprised everybody else, to find that, after all that had been said by the Government last Autumn, after months had elapsed since the discussion which took place in the Autumn Session in December, when they had supposed that the Admiralty would come forward with plans ready cut and dried, and after the utter reversal by the authorities of the Admiralty of all the statements they had previously made in that House and in "another place" as to the requirements of the Navy—it must have surprised everyone to find that nothing had been done to give good effect to the pledges of Her Majesty's Ministers. They were told in the middle of last year by the First Lord of the Admiralty that their Navy was much superior to that of France, and superior, indeed, to any other Navy in the world, and that there was no sort of foundation for what he termed the exaggerated statements which had been made in regard to the inefficiency of the Navy. All of a sudden, under the influence of an agitation raised in the country when the country had become alive to the danger which existed in consequence of the weakness of the Navy, the same noble Lord at once reversed his statement, and acquiesced in the opinion that was forced upon him by the unanimous verdict of the country. They were then told in the House of Commons that a sum of £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 would have to be spent upon the Navy. They came there that night in order to consider the Supplementary Naval Estimates, and they naturally looked to those Supplementary Estimates to find the commencement of the important expenditure which had been promised. They were certainly unprepared for the condition of things which had been brought before them that night in the statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty. He had not the least idea of casting any imputation upon the hon. Gentleman, or of saying one word that was disrespectful of him. The hon. Gentleman could only do that which it was in his power to do; but certainly nothing had ever occurred in that House of a more startling character than the answer which the hon. Gentleman had given to the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith)—that actually nothing but a few tenders had been issued for *Scouts*. No tenders whatever appeared to have been issued either for belted cruisers or torpedo boats, and this was four months after the first promise in regard to the matter was given by Her Majesty's Government. Every hon. Member in that House, upon whatever side he sat, whether he liked the increased expenditure or not, whether he was of the same opinion as the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) or not, went away from that Committee in December last fully impressed with the one idea that some millions of money were to be carefully and wisely expended upon the Navy. It did not occur to any Member of the House that he would be allowed to come back again in the month of March and listen to such an answer as that which had been given by the Secretary to the Admiralty to the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith). He did not think there was a parallel for such a startling circumstance to be found in the history of the country. First there was the extraordinary reversal of policy on the part of the First Lord of the Admiralty from a condition of boasted safety, in which nothing ought

to be done and nothing would be done, to a conviction forced upon him by the voice of the country that not only something, but a great deal, would have to be done. In the next place, they were led to believe that plans and arrangements would be laid down during the Recess with the view of expending some £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 upon the Navy; and now hon. Members came back to the House, three or four months after the promise was given, to be told that absolutely nothing had been done except an order issued for a few *Scouts*. He was sorry that the representations which had been made in the House of Commons had not only been treated with disrespect, but with apparently utter and supreme contempt. That would not matter very much if it were not for the condition of the country, which rendered it essential that this increased expenditure upon the Navy should be undertaken. Her Majesty's Government well knew that it was essential, and events which had since transpired showed the folly of delay. Let them only look at the state of Africa, and the feeling of insecurity in our Colonies. It was impossible to conceive anything more serious. He was sorry that the First Lord of the Admiralty had not a seat in that House. It was always a source of trouble to the House of Commons when the First Lord had a seat in "another place." It was impossible for the Admiralty to be represented by Gentlemen who possessed the entire respect of the House more than the Secretary to the Admiralty, and the Civil Lord, whom he was glad to congratulate on the first occasion of his appearance in his official capacity; but they knew that the power was vested in others and not in them, and he concurred with his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) that it was a scandal that none of the chief Ministers of the Crown should have been present on the Treasury Bench upon an occasion like this. He was glad to see that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had returned to his place. He had not risen now to discuss matters connected with the Dockyard expenditure. He thought he might fairly assume that all questions connected with that expenditure would come on in regular order in the discussion of the Navy Estimates proper; but he was entitled to have a full explanation of the conduct of the Board of Admiralty, who appeared to him to have done nothing but utterly neglect the duties imposed on them by Parliament, the responsibilities of which had been fully accepted by them.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he rose to a point of Order. He wished to know from the Chairman, if the hon. Gentleman would be good enough to inform him, when he would be in Order in referring to the jam of the Gardner gun? On what Vote could he raise that question?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman will be perfectly in Order in raising that question on the Vote which refers to the guns in the Army Estimates. I presume that those Estimates will not come on to-night. When the Army Estimates are proposed they will include a Vote for guns.

Mr. SEXTON wished to ask a question with reference to the operations of the gunboat *Wasp*, which had been wrecked upon the West Coast of Ireland, and which, at the time of its last cruise, was in charge of a navigating officer who had only been recently appointed, and who was entirely unacquainted with the coast? It was said that the gunboat had been employed in assisting certain landlords in serving notices of eviction. He should like to know if the Secretary to the Admiralty approved of the use of Her Majesty's ships, and the services of the officers and seamen of the Royal Navy, in turning out of their homes a number of wretched persons who were obtaining a precarious livelihood on that part of the Irish Coast? He did not think that the people of England would approve of the employment of the seamen and officers of the Royal Navy for any such purpose; and he would ask upon what conditions the ships of Her Majesty were placed at the service of the landlords in Ireland for the purpose of serving civil processes? He would be glad to receive any indication of what the Government proposed to do in the matter. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had on a former occasion asked a Question in that House, to which the reply on the part of the Admiralty was that with regard to transports every invitation would be given to Irish shipowners to send in tenders. But he had read in an Irish newspaper of the 2nd instant a statement to the effect that the Admiralty having invited

tenders for contracts, they were duly forwarded by the shipowners; but that none of the work had been allotted to them. He begged to assure the hon. Gentleman that unless the undertaking given to the hon. Member for the City of Cork was carried out—the Belfast firms, for instance, being as competent as any in the Kingdom—it would provoke considerable comment from Irish Members from the point of view that the promise given had turned out to be nothing more than a delusion.

MR. CAINE said, with regard to the question asked by the hon. Member for Sligo, that the shipowners of Ireland would have the right of tendering as a matter of course, and that the Admiralty accepted the lowest tender that was most suitable, no matter from what part of the country the tender might come. He would now refer for a moment or two to the complaints made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) with regard to vessels of the *Scout* class and torpedoes. It was only on the 2nd of December that the House sanctioned the building of those six *Scouts*; the plans were got out within a month after; and if the right hon. Gentleman remembered the difficulty there was in getting out plans, he believed he would say that to get the plans ready by the 2nd of January was very quick work indeed. The Admiralty having the wish that the orders should be spread throughout the country, 37 shipbuilders were invited to send in tenders for the construction of ships of the *Scout* class; it took over a month to get all the information required for tendering; a week was then given to the manufacturing firms to consider, and to get out their tenders. That was a short time; and a week for the Admiralty to consider the plans was, in his opinion, also a short time, and yet the 27th of February was the date on which the purchase of the ships of the *Scout* class was finally settled. He regarded this as one of the smartest things ever done by the constructive staff of the Admiralty. He did not think it would be unreasonable to give shipbuilders seven or eight weeks for sending in their plans. It should be remembered that in the case of an ordinary firm purchasing a merchant ship, three weeks was the period given to the builders to take out their quantities and send in estimates; and he did not think that the time named was too long with regard to vessels to be constructed for the Admiralty. With regard to the torpedo plans, a Committee had been appointed to conduct important experiments before coming to a decision, and the delay had been simply in consequence of the desire of the Board of Admiralty to secure the best type under the circumstances. With regard to gun-mountings, in consequence of new and better guns having been invented, new machinery had become necessary which would greatly facilitate the getting out of the gun-mountings in future. The delay that had taken place was attributable solely to the necessity of having new machinery.

SIR JOHN HAY said, he hoped it was not to be understood from the statement of the hon. Gentleman that the lowest tender was always accepted, because the Admiralty had never proceeded on that principle before. He had understood the hon. Gentleman to say that.

MR. CAINE: No; the lowest tender consistent with sound shipbuilding.

SIR JOHN HAY understood that the *Black Prince* had been at one time stated to be not worth repairing, and that the *Bellerophon* had been in process of repair for five years. As far as he was aware, there was no immediate prospect of those repairs being completed. He would ask the hon. Gentleman in what state of repairedness those ships might be.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, it was desirable to bring forward a ship to complete the number of ships which were now maintained in the Channel Fleet. As the right hon. and gallant Admiral would agree, it was extremely desirable to bring forward a ship well adapted to the training of seamen. A large number of their young seamen were sent to the Channel Fleet. The *Black Prince* was very suitable for that purpose, and she would be so employed.

SIR JOHN HAY: What is the condition of the *Black Prince*?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, she had been surveyed with regard to fitness, and it had been found that her boilers were in good condition.

SIR JOHN HAY asked why the *Bellerophon* had been so long under repair?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY said, he could only speak with regard to the *Black Prince*. He believed that the repairs of the *Bellerophon* would be completed very shortly. It was at one time thought that she might be used as a gunnery vessel; but he believed it was now intended that she should relieve one of the iron-clads stationed abroad.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he believed that the *Bellerophon* had been more or less under repair, in the Dockyard, for five years. She had gone to Devonport towards the close of 1879; she was intended first to be used as a gunnery vessel; but at last, he believed, there was some question as to whether the guns it was intended she should carry could be had or not. His right hon. and gallant Friend (Sir John Hay) had referred to the *Black Prince* and the *Warrior*. Now, the *Black Prince* had been put aside some years ago because of the expense that it was estimated would be incurred in repairing her. It was estimated that the cost of making her an efficient ship would be £120,000, for she would require to have new boilers and alterations made in her armour. He understood that the Admiralty had spent £40,000 upon her, which would make her less inefficient for 18 months only, at the end of which time the result would be that the whole of the money would be found to have been thrown away—that was to say, that the money would disappear in the time mentioned. Again, the *Warrior* was in almost the same condition. It was obvious that she could not remain serviceable for more than two years; and he doubted whether, in case of war, she could serve out another year, even with the money that had been spent on her. The result of this was that they had two ships on which they could not rely in case of war. It was impossible to rely on them; they were not capable of steaming at full speed even with the alterations which had been made, and the repairs which had been executed, and the whole of the money now being spent upon them would be practically wasted.

Mr. ONSLOW said, that, observing a charge of £250,000 for conveyance of troops from this country to Egypt, he wished to know whether the ships employed were those paid for by the Indian Government, and in which troops were sent out to India? He was not aware that these hired ships were usually employed to bring troops home; on the contrary, he was inclined to the opinion that the Government of India used only the ordinary troop-ships for this purpose. Now, it seemed to him that if these troop-ships, which were paid for by the Government of India, were being used for the conveyance of troops to Egypt, the Indian Government would pay indirectly for the conveyance of those troops. If his view of the case were correct, he should like to know whether any extra expense would be placed upon the Indian Government in consequence of the troops leaving the country in the troop-ships referred to? He wished to make it clear that no expense was put upon India on account of this Vote.

Mr. CAINE said, that the intention of the Government on the point raised by the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) was that no expense at all should fall upon India with regard to the Egyptian Expedition.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the answer of the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty was, in his opinion, most unsatisfactory. He was glad to find, although the hon. Gentleman contradicted himself twice in saying so, that the contracts referred to by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) were given out altogether irrespective of nationality; but he went on to say that the Government were bound to have due regard to the requirements of different parts of the country with respect to the disposal of these contracts.

Mr. CAINE: I said it was the wish that every part of the country should have an opportunity of tendering for these ships.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he had thought that the meaning of the hon. Gentleman was that, while due regard was to be had to economy, regard was also to be had to the dispersal of work in the parts of the country which most required it. But it appeared that he had misunderstood the hon. Gentleman. If no regard was to be had to nationality, it was a remarkable circumstance that none of the contracts had reached Irish hands. Now, that was a matter upon which Irish Members felt very strongly indeed. In Belfast, certainly, there were some of the most eminent and successful shipbuilders in

the world, and they were selected to construct ships for which he believed was the most go-ahead and successful of American Lines — namely, the White Star Line. It seemed to him a most extraordinary thing that in Belfast, where work was so sadly wanted, and where encouragement was so much required, there should not be a single Government contract being executed. According to a statement in the public Press, it appeared that there was reason to believe that the work that was expected to go to a large Irish shipbuilding firm would go to the Clyde, although no official intimation had been given. If that were the case, he thought that Irish Members would be justified in contrasting the amount of work given to Glasgow in times of prosperity and withheld from Belfast in times of need. The hon. Gentleman had given the same answer with regard to transports as with regard to shipbuilding; he said that these were employed irrespective of nationality; and he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) repeated that, while it was said that nationality was not considered, Irish nationality was excluded in the matter of transports.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, he might assure the hon. Member who had just sat down that there was no question whatever of nationality in this matter. Anyone could obtain the terms of the contracts on application at the Admiralty. In case the Inspector sent on behalf of the Admiralty reported that the execution of the work could be fittingly done by them, the applicants were placed upon the list. Irish firms were treated in the same manner as English and Scotch firms. One Irish firm had been put on the list, and had been invited to tender for some of the ships that were to be constructed.

MR. SEXTON: What is the difference between the prices?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: I do not know what the figures were; I cannot give any information upon that subject.

MR. DAWSON complained that in the case of contracts with regard to other branches of the Service which were given to Irish firms, the firms in question had not been fairly treated. He knew of a firm that obtained a large supply of material, a short time ago, for the purpose of executing a contract; but although they were told, when they tendered, that it would be a very large contract, they only received a very small order. He hoped that Irish firms would in this matter have the same chance as English and Scotch firms.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Certainly. An Irish firm is now building a vessel for the Admiralty.

MR. DEASY said, that the vessel referred to was only a tank-ship, which would cost only a few thousand pounds, and he did not think they had much to thank the Government for on that account. The Dock Company applied to the Admiralty to be placed on the list, and the Admiralty sent down an Inspector, who went through the Dockyard, and expressed himself highly pleased with the plant there, and reported favourably to the effect that the Dock Company were capable of turning out a ship of 1,500 tons displacement. Improvements had taken place in the Docks since that time, and there was little doubt that they could turn out a ship of 2,000 tons. But the Government took credit for having given them this little ship to build; and, although they were placed on the list in April, it was not until the autumn that they were asked to tender, and it was not until the senior Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) threatened to make this matter unpleasant for the Government that they obtained even the order in question. Now, this Dock Company built steamers for some of the largest ship owners in the world; and he did not think that there was a shipbuilding firm in Ireland which could turn out a vessel in a more satisfactory manner than the Royal Victoria Dock Company. Of course, the Belfast firms could build larger ships; but he believed, for the size of the ships, that no shipyard in the Kingdom could give more satisfaction than Passage Dock. One very important question raised in the course of the debate, by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), had not been dealt with by hon. Gentlemen who spoke from the Government Bench. The hon. Member referred to the loss of a gun-boat conveying troops for the purpose of evicting some unfortunate persons in Ireland, and he thought the matter was one which demanded some explanation at the hands of the Admiralty. It seemed to him strange that the Government should employ the ships of the Navy

for the purpose of carrying out evictions, and he thought that the landlords should have been required to transport the troops from the mainland at their own expense, if troops were necessary, seeing that they had the police of the district at their command. Before the debate closed he trusted that some answer to his hon. Friend's inquiry would be forthcoming. They were told that there was no prejudice at the Admiralty against Irish firms; but he doubted that very much. He had himself asked the hon. Gentleman representing the Admiralty last autumn a Question with respect to the supply of meat for the Navy; but he could get no reply whatever on the subject. He had now to complain that, although the tenders of the Irish houses were at a lower price than those of the Danish firms, the contract was given to a Danish firm at a higher price. He had asked the hon. Gentleman to compare the prices of the Irish house with those of the Danish house, and he declined to do so. If the hon. Gentleman wished to show that there was no prejudice at the Admiralty against Irish firms, he thought he should have no hesitation in placing a statement of the prices on the Table of the House, so that they might see that no injustice had been done to Irish firms. When the Estimates were presented he should feel it his duty to go more fully into this matter. He had also asked another Question of the Secretary to the Admiralty that evening, and the answer to it had been very unsatisfactory. The hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had also made reference to it. He (Mr. Deasy) had asked whether any Irish firms had tendered for the supply of transport vessels to Her Majesty's Government; whether their tenders had been accepted; and whether those tenders were as low as those of English and Scotch firms? The hon. Gentleman had replied that the matter was still under investigation; and that when the Admiralty considered the tenders they would ignore nationality altogether, and that they would give a fair chance to those Irish firms who tendered. He trusted the Admiralty would bear that in mind when they came to decide on the matter; and he would point out that if the Government wished to convince Irish Members that there was no partiality in the case, and no prejudice against Irish firms, they need only place the prices on the Table of the House when the contracts were accepted. He hoped that before the ordinary Estimates came forward the Government would be able to assure them that they had accepted contracts for shipbuilding in Ireland. It was all very well for them to say that they accepted the lowest tender; but they asked nothing more from the Government than that they should give Irish firms fair play. They were entitled, however, to say that a due proportion of the money to be expended on shipbuilding should go to Ireland, and that Irish firms should be allowed to compete amongst themselves for work to the amount of that sum. It was not fair to place a ship-building yard which had never had an opportunity of constructing ships for the Government on the same footing as a shipbuilding yard which was in the habit of doing Government work. In common justice the Government ought to allocate a fair portion of the Navy Expenditure amongst Irish firms.

Mr. GILES wished to explain to the House what was the practice in commercial circles as to issuing tenders. He, of course, assumed that the Government had followed the usual practice. If work was to be given out, and the principal firms—say 10 in number—of the particular business — take shipbuilding, for instance — were selected, the persons making the selection would feel that any one of the firms would be quite competent to carry out their views, and, therefore, when the tenders were sent in, they would accept the lowest. If, however, the person having work to give out advertised publicly for tenders, he was by no means bound to take the lowest, because it very often happened that the lowest tender was received from a firm whom he knew to be incompetent. He (Mr. Giles) had had occasion to send out tenders for shipbuilding; and amongst the firms from whom he invited tenders were Messrs. Harland and Wolff, of Belfast. He should have been quite prepared to give them the work if their tender had been as low as that of others; but it was not. With all their eminence as shipbuilders, they could not work as cheaply as the people of the Clyde or the Wear, or even as cheaply as the people at Southampton. He only men-

tioned this that Irish Members might not have any feeling that Ireland had been lost sight of in matters of this kind. As he was upon his feet, he could not help alluding to the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston). He was very sorry, indeed, to hear from the hon. Member that the preparation of the designs for the new iron-clads were out of the hands of the designers within a month, and that the other preliminaries to the construction of the new war vessels were completed with equal rapidity. He could excuse the anxiety of the country to see their Navy considerably strengthened; but there was an old adage it was well to remember—namely, "Sometimes the most haste is the worst speed." He was persuaded that it was not always wise to hurry too much in the preparation of the designs of their fighting ships.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, he must ask permission of the Committee to refer, in the first place, to the question put by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) with reference to the employment of gun-boats on the coast of Ireland. With regard to the question of policy which was raised by the inquiry of the hon. Gentleman, he (Sir Thomas Brassey) had no opinion to offer; it was not competent for him to discuss that point. He might, however, explain to the hon. Member that it was the duty of the Admiralty to furnish vessels to the various Departments of Government when required for the execution of public duty. He was asked by the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Deasy) with reference to the tenders for provisions. He feared he could not comply with the request of the hon. Gentleman by laying on the Table a Return showing the prices at which the various competing firms tendered for the supply of provisions for the Navy; indeed, it would be a breach of confidence to make a revelation of that nature. He assured hon. Members from Ireland that the Admiralty wished to deal with the country they represented in a spirit of fair play; and that if tenders should come from Ireland for the building of ships or the supply of provisions at prices which enabled the Admiralty to allocate contracts to that country, it would be a great satisfaction to the Admiralty to do so. He was glad to hear from his hon. Friend the Member for Southampton (Mr. Giles) that he appreciated the necessity of giving great care and consideration to the designs of ships they were putting out to contract. He reminded the Committee that Lord Ravensworth's Committee, after most careful inquiry into this particular subject, recommended, in a very able Report to the Admiralty, that the greatest care and deliberation should be exercised in maturing the designs of ships before inviting tenders from private firms for the construction of the vessels. It was very properly urged by Lord Ravensworth's Committee that much public money could be saved by greater care being taken in the preparation of the designs. The Admiralty had been anxious to follow the recommendation of Lord Ravensworth's Committee on the first occasion which had arisen since the Report was made; and, therefore, special pains had been taken to make the designs for the cruisers, and the *Scouts*, and other vessels which they were putting out to contract, as perfect as possible before the commencement of the work. He was persuaded that, although there might be some delay in putting out the vessels to contract, by exercising due care and deliberation in completing the designs a gain in time and economy would in the end accrue. Having, he believed, answered all the questions which had been raised by hon. Members, he need not detain the Committee longer.

MR. DAWSON said, there was one other matter to which it was well attention should be called. In the matter of shipbuilding and the supply of provisions, the particulars of the requirements were well known to the English firms who tendered for the work; but it was not so in Ireland. By what means could Irish shipbuilders and merchants ascertain clearly and accurately what was to be tendered for? Were advertisements issued in the papers? In the absence of information on the point, it appeared to him that the contracts were so vast, and the amount of money involved so great, that Irish firms were not acquainted with all the details. Besides, to permit of many Irish firms tendering for the large and immense requirements of the Navy, it was necessary that a change should be effected in the banking system of Ireland. Sup-

posing that a firm of Irish shipbuilders possessed the knowledge of the amount of money required to comply with some of the tenders, it was of the greatest importance to them that they should be able to go to one or other of the banking concerns in Ireland, and to say—"We want to tender for such and such contract, and on condition that we get the work we shall require so much money; will you advance it to us? You will, of course, be sure to obtain the repayment of the money, because you will practically have the security of Her Majesty's Government." He should like to know what were the means of information at the command of Irish firms who were rather new to contracts of such magnitude? Were advertisements published in the newspapers?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY said, that when any shipbuilding was to be given out, it was the practice of the Department to communicate with all the firms on the Admiralty List.

Mr. DAWSON inquired if the hon. Gentleman was acquainted with all the shipbuilding firms of Ireland who were competent to tender for Government work? If tenders were invited by advertisements, probably a firm of whom the hon. Gentleman was not aware might see their way to make an offer. What he desired to know was, how Irish firms were to enter into the competition; how they were to become possessed of knowledge of the conditions with which they were to comply?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY said, that if any of the Irish shipbuilders would communicate with the Admiralty, Inspectors would be sent to their yards to see if they were capable of doing Government work; and if they were found to be capable, he would take care they were placed on the Admiralty List.

Mr. BIGGAR said, that in reference to the claim set up to have a portion of the Admiralty work allocated to Ireland, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey had said it would be a breach of trust to disclose the prices given for the various articles supplied to the Navy. He (Mr. Biggar) was not acquainted with shipbuilding; but, as an old trader, he was persuaded that if the Government wished to get the best and, indeed, proper value for their money, they must not stick at disclosing the contract prices. It must be well known to all persons that there was great variation in the quality of work done by shipbuilders, just as there was a great difference in the quality of the other articles supplied to the Navy. It was, therefore, of the greatest importance in the interest of the public, as represented by the Admiralty, that prices at which articles were supplied should be known. Under the present secret system, it was quite possible for shipbuilders to get a sum from the Admiralty altogether disproportionate with the class of work done. Such a state of things, however, would soon cease if it were possible for criticism to appear in the newspapers and through the voices of Members of Parliament with regard to the mismanagement of the Department in this particular. He knew that Harland and Wolff, of Belfast, were eminently competent to do the work of the Admiralty, for they were as good shipbuilders as it was possible to find. Harland and Wolff might ask higher prices than some other shipbuilders; but, at the same time, they did immensely better work, and therefore it was to the interest of the public that the Admiralty should give the preference to that firm. The same principle applied to all the other articles supplied to the Navy. Take the case of pressed beef. No doubt, the American pressed beef could be obtained at a cheaper rate; but, as regarded quality, it was not to be compared with the Irish beef. Instead of perpetuating the antiquated and stupid system of keeping the prices paid secret, the Admiralty ought in every case to publish them. If people then found that higher prices were being paid for particular articles than those at which they could afford to supply, they would, no doubt, tender. It stood to reason that the result of disclosing the prices would be that a much larger number of people would enter the competition. The great temptation in regard to contracting was the hope of large profit. He remembered that at the time of the American War the Government had to give for pressed beef a far higher price than the trade value of the article. The occasion was an emergency, and the supply was wanted in a hurry. The number of people who, up to that time, had been tendering for this particular article had been very limited, and they had been paid such extravagant prices, and had made such

enormous profits, that others rushed in and contracted at prices even lower than they could afford to take. The result was that the Government recouped themselves for all the extravagant prices they had previously paid. The observance of secrecy led to no good whatever, and therefore he hoped that, after consultation with the Admiralty Authorities, the hon. Gentleman (Sir Thomas Brassey) would be able to see his way to introduce an entirely different system.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he could say, of his own knowledge, that the system of secrecy with regard to Government contracts was attended with very great danger of corruption, if not peculation. He recollected a case which came under his observance some years ago. A contractor had sent in to a large Public Department tenders at a certain price for an article which was not very extensively used. He tendered at such a figure as involved loss. He tendered three times over, and each time his tender was disregarded; and another contractor, whom he knew personally, informed him that his tender, which was something like 50 per cent higher, had been accepted. Well, now, the contractor whose tender was disregarded was a sensible man, and, instead of troubling himself to still further lower his price, met an official of the Department, and explained to him his grievance. "Oh," said the official, "if you will dine with me to-morrow, I will introduce you to Mr. So-and-so." The contractor accepted the invitation; and the consequence was, that the next time he tendered, his tender was accepted, and for aught he (Mr. A. O'Connor) knew, the tender of the gentleman had been accepted by the Department ever since. Such was one of the results of the secrecy observed in regard to Government contracts. So much for the contract system. Now, it had been said that the Admiralty was perfectly free from all prejudice as regarded Ireland. He wished he could think so. Five years ago he was at some trouble to point out to the House the practical "Boycotting" which Ireland experienced at the hands of the Admiralty. Every single thing which the Admiralty could do to deprive Ireland of a fair share in the funds which the Admiralty had to distribute, was done. If there was any possibility of curtailing expenditure in Ireland, it was taken advantage of; no opportunity was seized of making something like a fair distribution of the National Expenditure. Let them take the case of the Dockyards, which was only one branch of the Services included in this Supplementary Estimate. Under that head there was always something like £1,750,000 expended at home and abroad; at home about £1,600,000 was expended. One Dockyard in England received £330,000; another got £270,000; and another got £200,000. What did Ireland get? The large sum of £900, not 1-1,600th part of the total sum expended. If the Committee turned to the Victualling Vote, they would find a similar state of things—Ireland obtained a sum equal to 1-72nd part of the whole Vote. These were the most important Votes taken by the Admiralty, and this was the way in which Ireland was treated. When he referred five years ago to this system, it was not contested by the then Secretary to the Admiralty and the present Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). All the right hon. Gentleman said was —"Oh, we are doing something at Haulbowline, and we intend to spend £25,000 a-year there." As a matter of fact, the Admiralty had not spent that amount of money. The Government had not spent as much money at Haulbowline as they said they intended to spend, and the reason assigned was that they were obliged to employ convict labour on that kind of work, and Ireland was so free from crime that they could not get enough convicts. Now that the convicts had been removed from Haulbowline, the difficulty attending the mixing of free and convict labour had been removed. All the contracts came to England; all the money for victualling was expended in England; all the money for Admiralty services of every kind and description was spent in England and for the benefit of England. In Ireland there was spent nothing except £193 under one Vote, and a somewhat similar sum under another Vote. There had been ample opportunities of testing the sincerity of the Government in this respect; and, after the experience he had had in connection with the distribution of Naval Expenditure, he should be very chary of accepting any assurances from the Government.

Mr. P. J. POWER said, he was glad to hear the Representative of Her Majesty's Government who had charge of these Votes say that the Admiralty were actuated by feelings of fair play towards Ireland. He was sure that personally the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey) was actuated by no other feeling. At the same time, he thought that the figures which his hon. Friend the Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) had given showed that in their dealings towards Ireland, the Admiralty did not act up to their professions. According to the statement of his hon. Friend, who was regarded as an authority upon such subjects, Ireland received a mere bagatelle in proportion to the enormous sums expended on Dockyards in other parts of the United Kingdom. No one could contend that the people of Ireland did not contribute their fair share of taxation; indeed, most people acknowledged that now-a-days the taxation paid by the Irish people was altogether out of proportion to their means—altogether out of proportion to what the richer parts of England paid. He, therefore, thought that a certain amount of restitution was due to the people of Ireland. He spoke on this subject with some difficulty, because he knew he addressed a Government who believed implicitly in the principles of Free Trade. He was, however, prompted to say that, inasmuch as the English Government had in times past destroyed the industries of Ireland, it was only due to the people that they should receive something now by way of restitution. According to an authority —Mr. Froude—who could not be said to be particularly favourable to Ireland, England had destroyed Irish industries and——

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is now travelling beyond the limits of the Question. It is not competent for him to discuss the general policy of the Government towards Ireland when the items of certain Supplementary Votes are under consideration.

Mr. P. J. POWER said, he had no doubt strayed away from the Question, owing to the fact that he was not yet conversant with the Rules of Debate. This, however, was a time when Her Majesty's Government could mend their ways by giving to Ireland a little more of the money the Irish people paid to them in the form of taxation. He did not know whether he should be out of Order in alluding to the question of chaplains. If so, he should like to ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey) a question concerning the employment of chaplains. Within the last few days he had received letters from boys in his own part of Ireland desiring that he should give them notes of recommendation with which to endeavour to enter the Navy. Before complying with the desire of his correspondents, he wished to ask the hon. Gentleman what provisions were made in the Navy for providing chaplains for Catholic boys?

Mr. KENNY said, that as he observed that one of the items of the Vote was for the conveyance of troops, he would like to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Caine) if he would explain to the Committee the circumstances under which the *Poonah* was recently disabled?

Mr. DEASY said, he thought the Irish Members were entitled to an answer to the statements made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor). With regard to the works at Haulbowline, he might say that he had visited them recently, and he was astonished to find that they were in a more advanced state than he expected. At the same time, he was bound to say that, at the present rate of progress, it would be a long time still before the works would be in proper working order. The floating dock would be finished shortly, and the dry dock could soon be completed; in fact, if the Government exerted themselves, they could within six or eight months launch a vessel from the dry dock. Instead, however, of employing a large number of men on the work, they employed a very limited number. He believed that not more than 400 men were employed at the present time, and the weekly sum paid to these men did not exceed £350. It would, of course, be of great consequence to the people of Queenstown, and indeed to the people of Ireland generally, if the Government were to lay down a vessel in the dry dock immediately. But, owing to the fact that no provision whatever had been made for the accommodation, in Haulbowline Island, of the workmen, it

would be useless to commence work for some time to come. He would like to know from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey) if any steps had been taken for the erection of the necessary buildings on the Island when the docks were completed? It would be a very unfortunate thing if, after expending £500,000 on this work, the docks should lie idle for three or four years more, simply because there was no accommodation for workmen on the Island, and no plant set up for the building or repairing of ships. Could the Government give the Committee any idea as to the time in which the docks would be completed; and would they state further if they intended to take steps to have houses and all the necessary accommodation for workmen, and the appliances required by those workmen for the carrying on of their trade, provided by the time of the completion of the docks? He had heard it was intended that the docks should be finished in the course of three years.

Mr. CAINE said, that some of the subjects alluded to by hon. Members did not rightly come under the present Vote. If they looked at the Estimates relating to the Dockyards they would see that the sum of £82,000 had been expended altogether, and that of that amount Ireland had received £36,000. That had been, or was going to be, spent at Haulbowline. With regard to the transport *Poonah*, she had been bringing troops home in the regular course, and was not one of those transports included within this Supplementary Vote. The accident which had happened to her was entirely unforeseen, and the Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company, to whom she belonged, could not be held responsible for what had occurred; much less could any blame be attached to the Admiralty.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he should like to ask the hon. Gentleman who represented the Admiralty, whether or not he was disposed to make a reply to the point raised by himself (Mr. Biggar) and another hon. Member as to the desirability of publishing the prices paid by the Government for provisions, and as to the desirability of giving the public some idea of the contracts entered into for supplying necessaries to the Navy? This appeared to him to be a matter of great importance, and one deserving the attention of the Government and the Committee, seeing that the present practice was perfectly contrary to the public interest. Some reply should be given by one or other of the hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench representing the Admiralty. What argument was there to be urged in favour of the present system?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY said, that, in reply to the hon. Member, he was obliged to state that, under the present arrangement, to publish the details asked for would be a breach of confidence on the part of the Government, to which exception might properly be taken by the firms supplying the Admiralty. He should be happy to comply with the suggestion which had come from hon. Gentlemen opposite and consult with the officers responsible for the administration of the Department in relation to contracts; and if more publicity could be given to these transactions without a breach of confidence, he should be happy to consider what steps the Government could take in the matter.

Mr. DEASY said, the hon. Gentleman had not answered one of the questions put to him—namely, that with regard to the works in progress at Haulbowline Docks. Had provision been made for the erection of houses at Haulbowline Island for the workmen to be employed when the docks were finished?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY said, the Admiralty could not at present pledge themselves as to the decision to which they would arrive at with regard to the completion of buildings and the equipment of the buildings at Haulbowline. All the Government could say for themselves was that they had added considerably to the annual expenditure for the prosecution of the works at Haulbowline. Free labour had been substituted for convict labour, and 400 persons were now employed. When the Navy Estimates for the year were proposed, he should probably be able to give fuller information upon this matter.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Caine), in reply to an observation he (Mr. A. Connor) had made some time ago—and a reply which he was sorry to say he had not heard—had stated that the Government were spending some £36,000 a-year out of £82,000 in Ireland for Government

purposes, without including shipbuilding. This amount, he believed, was spent on Dockyards. Probably the hon. Member would have the Committee and the country to believe that that represented something like the ratio of expenditure in Ireland compared with that in Great Britain.

MR. CAINE: Only as far as one matter is concerned — namely, Dockyards.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Very well. If the hon. Gentleman would allow him, he would state to the Committee the facts with regard to the expenditure under Dockyard Vote, No. 6.

MR. CAINE said, that his statement had reference to the expenditure under Vote 11, on page 19 of the Estimates. He had pointed out that the Government were spending £36,000 on Dockyards in Ireland out of a total sum of £82,000.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that, no doubt, the hon. Gentleman's statement was correct as to 1884-5 in regard to this particular Vote. This was a year in which the Vote for England was exceptionally low, and the Vote for Ireland exceptionally high; but it was only one out of a large number of Votes. He Mr. A. O'Connor) had not been complaining of this item at all. What he had complained of was that, under Vote 6, out of a total expenditure of £1,500,000 Ireland obtained only £965. There was a very great difference in proportion between £965 and £1,500,000, and £36,000 and £82,000. Well, he came to the next Vote for the Victualling Service at home. Here, again, out of a total of £72,000 Ireland only received £1,000. It was altogether misleading for the hon. Gentleman to take one particular item out of one particular Vote which happened this year to be more than usually favourable for his purpose. It was unfair for the hon. Member to bring forward these two items to endeavour to lead the Committee to believe that they represented something like the proportion spent on the Navy in Ireland as compared with the expenditure in England. He Mr. A. O'Connor still complained that the expenditure on the Navy in Ireland was something like 1-400th part of what was expended in England. If the hon Gentleman would take the trouble to ascertain, by means of the furnished Returns, what the Admiralty had done year after year, he would see that the sum voted for expenditure in England was nearly always exceeded, and that it was never, or hardly ever—not once in 50 times—exceeded in Ireland. He argued, therefore, that the conduct of the Admiralty, so far as Ireland was concerned, was exceedingly unfair. He did not see how the Government could expect to find Irish Members consenting to a Vote of this kind, until they got a trustworthy assurance that, in the future, something like fairness would be adopted in regard to this Vote.

MR. PULESTON said, he was sorry to interpose between the Committee and the division which hon. Members wished to take; but he desired to urge for an answer on the subject of the tenders asked for for the construction of ships. He took it that not many would support the hon. Member who had moved the reduction of the Vote; but he should like to know whether or not they were to have an explicit statement from the Admiralty as to what was to be done under the practical Resolution adopted last autumn, before the Vote was taken that evening? If such a statement were not made that night, when would it be made? As he had said, he was sorry to interpose; but he was under the impression, and others besides himself in the House were under the impression, that the Budget had something to do with this reticence on the part of the Government. He was glad to see the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his place. If there was to be a Vote of Credit, would the extra amount to be spent on the Navy come on later, so as to be put into the account of another year?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, the information the hon. Member asked for had been laid before the Committee when the Navy Estimates were moved.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 22; Noes 66: Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 41.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR PARNELL said, he desired to say a few words upon the shipbuilding contracts, or rather the contracts which had been given in Ireland for the construction of ships of the Royal Navy. He was glad to say, and he wished to

express his obligations to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey), that in reference to a particular vessel—namely, the tank vessel—which was under consideration when this subject was last before the House, a Cork firm of shipbuilders had been successful in obtaining the contract. But he had since learnt that this tank vessel was the only ship the building of which had been given to any shipbuilder in Ireland. Now, the cost of building this vessel was not excessive; it only amounted to a sum of about £8,000. He congratulated the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty upon having seen his way to give that contract to the Passage Docks Company; but, at the same time, he was bound to take this opportunity of saying that he considered the total result as regarded the number of contracts which had been given most unsatisfactory so far as Ireland was concerned. The particular firm in Ireland to which he referred had never throughout its existence received any contract until now from the Admiralty for the building of a vessel. It had done some odd jobs in the nature of repairs and so forth, but it had never before received a contract for the building of a complete vessel; and the position of Ireland with regard to the proportion of work which was given out to shipbuilding firms was most unfavourable. Now, he did not know from what cause this might arise—whether it was that the Irish firms had been lost sight of or not by the Admiralty, that they were not invited so often as the English and Scotch firms to tender for the construction of vessels; nor did he know whether it arose, on the other hand, from some favouritism on the part of those who had the acceptance of the tenders—but this he did know, that the result was that Ireland did not get her fair proportion, or anything like her fair proportion, of the Admiralty work. While Ireland contributed her full, and more than her full, proportion to the Imperial Exchequer for work of this kind, she got little or nothing in return. He was sure it must strike the Committee, and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty, that the sum of £8,000 spent on building ships in Ireland was not a fair proportion to be spent in that country of the millions which had been voted for this purpose; and he would ask the hon. Member whether some different system to that which at present obtained could not be adopted? The Belfast shipbuilders were noted amongst the famous shipbuilders of the world. It was known that Messrs. Harland and Wolff were the first to invent the new system by which the length of vessels was very greatly increased in proportion to their width, and that, in consequence of this invention, America had been brought several days nearer this country. How was it, then, that Messrs. Harland and Wolff had not yet obtained any contract from the Admiralty connected with the large sum of money which had been already voted for increased shipbuilding, and which they were asked to supplement that night? When Irish Members applied to Her Majesty's Government to see the tenders they were told that they could not be produced. Why could not the Admiralty, following the rule which was adopted by all private firms when contracts were given out, and when they invited contracts, publish all the tenders, whether successful or unsuccessful? Such a plan might conduce to the lowering of prices in the future. Those who had tendered in the past and been unsuccessful, would see how and why they had been unsuccessful; they would be encouraged by the knowledge of the difference there was between them and the successful competitors to cut in at a still lower price in the future. All Railway Companies, all contractors, and all private firms who had occasion to call for tenders for particular work, were in the habit of publishing the replies they received to their request for tenders; and if in the commercial and manufacturing and building world the adoption of such a custom had been found of advantage, why should it not be found of advantage in relation to the Admiralty also? Why should not the House have before it a list of the replies and of the tenders received with reference to the building of particular ships? Why should not these be laid on the Table of the House, so that hon. Members might be absolutely sure that fair play had been observed, and so that the unsuccessful competitors might be in a position to make still lower tenders hereafter, to the great advantage of the Public Service, and also to the advantage of the public purse? He supposed he should be told

that in the present case it was a case of accepting the lowest tenders. Well, if it was a question of accepting the lowest tenders, there surely could be no objection to laying the highest as well as the lowest upon the Table of the House, so that hon. Members might see exactly how matters stood, or that they might be able to ascertain how far short Irish contractors were from the English standard, and that it might be possible for the Irish shipbuilders to correct their prices for the future, and to enter successfully into competition with the Tyne, the Clyde, and other great shipbuilding centres in England and Scotland. He did not know what the present rules at the Admiralty were in this matter, and how far they might be precluded by the conditions under which the tenders were asked for from publishing these Returns; but it would be perfectly possible for them to change their rule for the future, and to give the House all the information required. Of course, the breach of confidence that the hon. Gentleman had pleaded that night could not prevail in the future. He (Mr. Parnell) wished to take this opportunity of bearing testimony—testimony which he was enabled to bear in consequence of having paid personal visit to the works—to the great facilities which could be obtained for the construction of war vessels in the yards of the Passage Docks Company. This Company was capable of constructing ships of a very large class indeed. Their machinery was admirably adapted for the work; and he earnestly hoped that the result of the attention which had been directed to this matter would be that in the future they would not see the magnificent shipbuilding establishments in Cork and Belfast entirely neglected by the Admiralty as they had been in the past, but that they would be given a fair share of the Imperial Expenditure on ships of war.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, the hon. Member who had just sat down had not been present during the somewhat lengthy discussion which had taken place upon these subjects. If he had been present he would have heard the assurance he (Sir Thomas Brassey) had endeavoured to give to hon. Members from Ireland. The firms he had recommended were well known to the Admiralty, who shared the hon. Member's high opinion of their capabilities. They had been invited to tender for the more important ships which were about to be put out to contract, and for his own part he should be glad to hear that they had been successful.

MR. DEASY wished to put a question to the hon. Gentleman with regard to the departure of the troops from Ireland for the Colonies and elsewhere. They embarked at Queenstown, but not on their way directly to their destination. They were taken to England, whence they were provisioned and sent on their journey, and the result was that the people of Cork, who might naturally have expected to be called upon to supply provisions for the outward voyage, had nothing to do with these contracts. This seemed to him a monstrous thing. Of course, the system he complained of had to do with the Army, and did not properly come under the Navy Estimates. He would be out of Order in going into it at any length, and also in referring to an evil for which he thought a remedy should be found—namely, the co-operative system, whereby officers prevented their men from making any purchases outside the barracks. This latter subject did not come under the Vote at all, and he would not further deal with it. All he would ask at the present moment was what, in future, the Government intended to do with regard to embarking troops for service abroad, and the victualling of such troops?

MR. CAINE replied, that the business of the Admiralty was to charter ships to the War Office, and they had nothing to do with the embarkation of the men, or of leave or permission given to the men to go on shore.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA wished to say a word or two, having had charge of a deputation which had waited upon His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge, the Commander-in-Chief of the Forces, on a subject which had an important bearing on this question. His Royal Highness had assured the deputation that in future, so far as possible, troops would be embarked direct from Cork or Queenstown, and not brought over to England in the first instance. He (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) had no doubt that His Royal Highness intended to carry out that pledge faithfully.

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1884-5).

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(2.) £3,000, Police—Counties and Boroughs, Great Britain.

(3.) £4,700, Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain.

MR. SEXTON said, he wished to ask the Secretary to the Treasury a question connected with this subject. He found, from the last Report of the Inspector General of Reformatory and Industrial Schools in Ireland, certain allowances made in respect of children who had left reformatories in Great Britain. The Inspector General mentioned an allowance of 2*s.* per week for the first 13 weeks, and 1*s.* per week for the next 26 weeks, after the liberation of the young persons from the reformatories—money laid out in the interest of the children to facilitate their being placed out in workshops.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman will observe that this is a Vote for the Reformatory and Industrial Schools of Great Britain.

MR. SEXTON said, he was quite aware of that, and he had no intention whatever of debating the propriety of applying this rule to Ireland. He simply mentioned the subject in order that the Committee might receive information to prepare them for the discussion which might take place on the ordinary Estimates. In that view he would ask whether the grant of this money to children released from reformatories in Great Britain had been attended with salutary results?

MR. HIBBERT said, he had no doubt that the granting of this money for the benefit of children after their release from reformatories had been beneficial. He was not aware that no similar law applied to Ireland. He would suggest to the hon. Member that it would be more convenient to raise the question of so applying it in connection with the Bill to carry out the recommendations of the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Commission, which was in course of preparation. Upon that Bill ample opportunity would be afforded for ventilating this question as it affected Ireland, because he believed the measure would apply to all parts of the United Kingdom.

MR. SEXTON said, he thanked the hon. Gentleman for his suggestion, which was a very practical one; and he hoped that when they came to take the debate on the introduction of the Bill, the hon. Gentleman would be able to give them the information now asked for.

Vote *agreed to.*

(4.) £96, Court of Bankruptcy, Ireland.

MR. BIGGAR said, he wished to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, or the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, whether they had any cause to find fault, generally speaking, with the administration of the Bankruptcy Law in Ireland? It appeared to him (Mr. Biggar), so far as he was able to form an opinion on the subject, that it was very doubtful whether the business of the Irish Bankruptcy Court was carried on economically, or in a satisfactory manner or not. He did not wish to debate the question as to whether or not it was desirable to take the greater part of the labour and business of the present Bankruptcy Court in Dublin from the parties who now performed the duties in that place, and intrust the Bankruptcy jurisdiction to Courts established in other parts of the country; but he would like to know whether the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland had any cause to find fault with the way in which the Bankruptcy Law had been heretofore administered, and whether or not he saw any substantial reason for the extension of the expenses and the increasing of the staff of the Court in Dublin? The total amount of the Vote was only £10,000; and so far as he could form an opinion upon the matter, it seemed that the business must be extremely limited—so small was the sum, and so small must the amount of business be, that he doubted very much whether there could be any sound excuse for extending the staff and increasing the expenses.

MR. KENNY said, before the hon. and learned Gentleman answered, he wished to put a question to the Secretary to the Treasury. There were so many items in these Estimates for compensation and for making good losses incurred, either individually or owing to some fresh fault attached to the Irish Government, that it was well to seek

some explanation when the Vote was before the Committee. He saw in connection with the Court of Bankruptcy an item called "An excess of £205 damages caused by loss in the matter of the case of A. M. Richardson," and he wished to know why the officers should be allowed to safeguard themselves in the case of serious mistakes of this kind at the public expense? He (Mr. Kenny should be obliged if the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury could explain how this item of £205 had come to be included in this Supplementary Estimate

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he should be far from saying that the Bankruptcy Court of Dublin was not a valuable one. His opinion was that the Bankruptcy Law was very well administered in Ireland, and that its administration would contrast very favourably with that of the English Bankruptcy Law. But, at the same time, there had been great demands from Belfast, Cork, and Limerick, for local Bankruptcy Courts, and it had been considered that it would be an advantage to start local Courts in order to bring the transaction of Bankruptcy business home to the doors of the suitors. This subject could be discussed when the Local Bankruptcy Bill—in the passing of which the assistance of the hon. Member for Cavan Mr. Biggar) would no doubt be given to the promoters—was before the House.

MR BIGGAR wished to know how many cases were tried daily in the Dublin Bankruptcy Court? Was it not a fact that the business of the Court did not average more than two or three cases a-week, and was it not a fact that the Court was idle half its time?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND Mr. WALKER) said, there was a Return before the House from which the hon Gentleman would see the number of bankruptcy cases which had occurred in Dublin, Belfast, and Limerick. The Return was laid on the Table on the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Monaghan Mr. Findlater .

MR. SEXTON said, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland appeared to be very shy of approaching the case of A. M Richardson. Who was A. M. Richardson—where was he, and what were these damages?

MR. HIBBERT pointed out that similar sums had been paid in previous years. In the matter of Mr. Richardson, although he knew nothing about that particular case, the sum was put down in the Estimates with the object of bringing it under the notice of the House. Previously, these sums had been paid without any notice of them being laid before the House.

MR. WARTON understood that the official assignees had a claim to be recouped for their costs and their expenses; but it appeared to him that this was not a case of costs or expenses, but one of damages. It was possible that these official assignees might have exceeded their duty and have been guilty of some negligence, and that somebody had been sharp enough to bring an action against them, and had secured damages. He wanted to know if this was a case in which persons had obtained damages through the incapacity or negligence of the official assignees? He did not know if it was so; but it might happen that the official assignees had done wrong in something.

MR. HIBBERT said, the official assignees might have exceeded their duty, and in that case the Judge of the Bankruptcy Court would give damages in respect of their having done so. He did not know if that was so, but that might possibly be the explanation.

MR. KENNY asked whether the Solicitor General for Ireland could not give some information upon the subject? The Act of 1874 was passed in order to prevent possible frauds of this kind in Ireland.

MR. HIBBERT contended that it was for the protection of the public that the matter was brought before Parliament.

MR. SMALL said, he understood the official assignees were not paid by salaries, but by fees; and he should like to be informed how much these gentlemen received last year?

MR. HIBBERT said, he could not possibly have a knowledge of all these points. He knew very little of the details of the question as far as Ireland was concerned, and did not know what those gentleman received.

MR. SMALL asked what Mr. Richardson received last year?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) stated that no sufficiently exhaustive Return had been issued to show what these sums were, and it was impossible for him to carry all these small items in his mind.

MR. KENNY complained that the Committee was asked to vote this sum of money, but the two hon. Gentlemen who were responsible for it were unable to give them any satisfactory explanation as to what it was for.

MR. HIBBERT said, he would be glad to make inquiries and furnish the hon. Member with the information.

MR. BIGGAR believed that if the Committee had the true explanation of this Vote they would find that there was something which would enable them to form a definite opinion as to whether this money ought to be granted or not.

Vote *agreed to.*

(5.) £2,050, Prisons, Ireland.

MR. DEASY said, he desired to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland one or two questions in regard to this Vote. It would be within the recollection of the hon. and learned Gentleman that he had been good enough last year to bring in a Bill to assimilate the Law of Ireland to that of England, upon its having been discovered that the two Acts of 1877 were not exactly similar, although Parliament at the time had been led to believe they were. The Irish counties went on paying about £15,000 a-year for the conveyance of prisoners since the passing of the present Prisons Act. This Act vested the control of prisons in the hands of the Government. Up to its passing the cost of transferring prisoners, tried and untried, was borne by the counties where those prisoners were arrested; and it was not discovered until three years after that in England the counties were not liable for this cost, and that it should be paid out of moneys voted by Parliament. A gentleman in the county of Surrey protested against the charge as illegal, and brought the case before the Court of Queen's Bench. On appeal, the matter was brought before the House of Lords, and it was then decided that the Government was responsible for this money themselves, and that the amount was illegally levied in England. Accordingly, the Prime Minister brought in a Bill to refund to the English counties all the money they had thus illegally paid up to the year 1882, amounting to £100,000. But when the Irish Members made an application to have a similar course pursued in regard to Ireland, it was discovered that there was something dissimiliar in the Irish Act to the wording of the English Act, and that the Irish counties were legally liable to pay these enormous sums. In 1882, however, the Cork Grand Jury refused to pay the charge, and the case was laid before the Judge of Assize, Mr. Justice Barry, who was on the Bench at the time. He did not give his decision outright, but had the matter argued before the Court of Queen's Bench in Dublin. After hearing the arguments, the Court of Queen's Bench decided that all the charge, with the exception of a very small portion, was a legal charge on the county. This small sum, which was not so chargeable, was a matter of only £200 a-year, and although the Grand Juries ought to have had that small sum returned to them, they were unable to get it. If there were any national representation on the Irish Grand Juries, no doubt the matter would have been pressed; but the Grand Juries in Ireland were almost entirely composed of landlords, who had a very small interest in these subjects, because they paid little rates themselves, and therefore they did not trouble themselves much about the county cess.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the hon. Member had himself explained the reason for the difference which existed between the case of the Irish counties and the English counties. The difference was an obvious one. The charge which had been made was an illegal one in England, and, therefore, the Government were equitably bound to refund the amount which had been illegally collected; but under the Irish Act, the charges were always legally made, and would have been so until now if a new Act had not been passed to alter the law. An amending Act having been passed, however, the Irish counties were put on exactly the same footing as the English counties.

MR. SEXTON remarked, that the hon. and learned Gentleman had talked about equity; but it appeared to him that from the point of view of equity the two cases were precisely the same.

It was originally intended that the two Acts should operate precisely in the same way, and it appeared that when the Act was altered in England equity compelled them to refund the amount illegally charged to the English counties. In the case of the Irish counties the equity was precisely the same; but, probably through the action of some cunning lawyer, a few words had been incorporated into the Irish Act, and these were used to cheat the Irish counties out of the same rights which were allowed to the English counties. They did not desire to have a prolonged debate on this question, and, for his part, he would be very glad to withdraw the claim they had made if any lawyer could tell the Committee what was the difference between the equity of the two cases. He thought that the argument which had been used by the Solicitor General for Ireland was not one which the hon. and learned Gentleman should couple with the name of equity.

MR P J POWER desired to draw attention to the circumstances attending the conveyance of prisoners in Ireland under the Prevention of Crime Act.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the hon. Gentleman would be out of Order in discussing the Prevention of Crime Act on this Vote.

MR. SEXTON, on the point of Order, wished to ask the Chairman whether the remands of prisoners and their conveyance to and from the prison and the Court under the Prevention of Crime Act would not come under this Vote? There were prisoners in Ireland arrested under the Prevention of Crime Act who were remanded time after time for upwards of a year, and he submitted that the conveyance of these prisoners from one place to another could be discussed on this Vote

THE CHAIRMAN said, the conveyance of such prisoners would be in Order, but it would not be in Order to enter into a discussion upon the policy of the Prevention of Crime Act

MR. P. J. POWER said, he was merely attempting to point out the circumstances connected with the conveyance of prisoners under the Prevention of Crime Act, which certainly came under this Vote. They had had prisoners conveyed from Galway and other places to Dublin for investigation and trial under the Prevention of Crime Act, and on this ground alone it was their duty to prevent, as far as they could, this Vote passing. They regarded it as one of the greatest scandals in Ireland that these prisoners should be conveyed about from place to place.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he did not think that cases of this sort, under the Prevention of Crime Act, did come under the Vote at present before the Committee. As the hon. Member would see from the particulars, this Vote was for the expenses incurred in the conveyance of prisoners from the period when the order for their committal to prison was made.

MR. SEXTON wished to ask a question in regard to the prisoners who had been conveyed backwards and forwards between Sligo and Dublin. One of these prisoners was being conveyed from one place to another, and the constable who was in charge of him put a pair of handcuffs on him which were very much too small for his wrists. In the process of handcuffing the man, therefore, the constable cut the wrists of the man, who complained of what had taken place, and was seen by the prison doctor at Sligo. The only reply the unfortunate man received from the doctor, however, was—"Oh, Paddy, they did not know that your wrists were so large." What he wished to know was, whether this brutal conduct was to continue; whether the right hon. Gentleman would make inquiries into the case, and ascertain if the expression he had quoted was made use of; if he discovered that the circumstances were as he Mr. Sexton had stated, whether he would reprove the persons who were responsible for such conduct?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he was not aware of the circumstances of the case to which the hon. Member had referred; but if the hon. Member would send him the facts, he would inquire into the matter.

MR SEXTON said, he would send the right hon. Gentleman a letter in the man's own handwriting.

MR. WARTON desired to know if there had been, in respect of this matter, a recent change in the law which had given rise to this supplementary amount becoming necessary? If not, it showed a gross error in the original Estimate.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) remarked,

that there had been a change in the law last Session which made this Supplementary Estimate necessary.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

(6.) £165,708, Public Education.

(7.) £7,000, Science and Art Department.

MR. DAWSON asked, what was the position of the New Science and Art Department in Dublin?

MR. MUNDELLA said, that question did not arise on the present Vote. The matter would be brought forward on the ordinary Estimates.

MR. SEXTON asked, whether the Report of the Commission and the scheme laid down for the development of Art Education in Ireland by Professor Sullivan had been taken into consideration?

MR. MUNDELLA said, he would prefer not to make any statement on that matter at present. The Report of the Commission had nothing to do with this Vote. The grant was one in which Ireland shared in precisely the same degree as England and Scotland.

MR. SEXTON said, it was evident that the right hon. Gentleman had not seen the document referred to, as it referred especially to grants.

Vote *agreed to.*

(8.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £83,520, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Salaries and Expenses of the National Gallery."

MR. CUBITT said, the amount of this grant was so exceptional that he thought it unnecessary to make any excuse for addressing the Committee on the subject. Whatever opinion there might be on the question involved, he thought that it was a Vote which ought not to be passed over silently. The Government proposed to give £87,500 for two pictures—that was to say, dividing the amount, £70,000 for one picture, and £17,500 for the other. This was an enormous price to pay for two pictures; and the sum was so large that it required some little consideration to realize its magnitude. He had seen, a short time since, an ingenious calculation, which turned the amount of £70,000 into halfpence, and showed that it represented a half-penny from every man, woman, and child in the United Kingdom. In other words, it represented a perpetual annuity of £2,000 a-year on the finances of the country, or £5 or £6 a-day for ever, and that simply for the purchase of one work of Art, without taking into account other expenses connected with it. It was also interesting to compare the cost of these pictures with some of the amounts derived from taxation at the present time. He found that it came very nearly to the amount which the Chancellor of the Exchequer obtained from Auctioneers' Licences; that it exceeded the sum he received from the Gun Tax, as well as that received from Armorial Bearings; it was more than two-thirds of the sum produced by the Tax for Male Servants, and was equal to that of the interest paid on the Two and a-Half per Cent Annuities before the recent transaction of the right hon. Gentleman. Finally, it was nearly half of the sum squeezed out of the Government for the repairs of the highways. These comparisons were, he thought, sufficient to show to the Committee that the amount in question was a very large one. There was another question which arose on the Vote. Was this the time when a large sum of this kind ought to be voted? It was a time of great and increasing depression in trade—not only in agriculture, but in all branches of trade; it was a time of heavy war expenses, and it was a time of rumours of war. They had been told, even that evening, of the great calls made on account of the Navy, not only for the purpose of war, but for the purpose of the defence of the country. They knew that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was preparing his Budget, and that the expenditure was so great that people must shudder when they thought of the consequences. Putting aside the exceptional state of things at the present moment, he asked whether it was wise for a Government to pay extreme prices for works of Art? The National Gallery had been formed by bequests and donations partly, and partly by purchases. But if Her Majesty's Government paid extreme prices for works of Art, would they not thereby discourage donations,

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and would not persons be eager to obtain those vast sums instead of leaving their pictures to the nation? This purchase was one of the first results of the new law allowing the sale of heirlooms. The possessors of the picture might be right in saying that they had one of the best works of Art in the country; but to say there would never be another work of Art in the country equal to it was saying rather too much. Again, he believed that the Trustees of the National Gallery were entitled to a grant of £10,000 a-year, which was subject to their own discretion and the control of the Treasury as to the way in which they spent it; but he thought he was right in saying that no further grant was to be made to the National Gallery Trustees until the annual ordinary grants amounted to the sum paid for these pictures, the consequence of which would be that if constant sales of pictures, as was in the present state of the country likely to happen, were to continue, it would be impossible for the Trustees of the National Gallery to have its share of them owing to the want of money. The case was the same with regard to the National Portrait Gallery, which from having made a costly purchase was prevented from buying for some time. He thought that this condition ought to be removed The National Gallery had not purchased since 1859 any single picture at a cost of more than £10,000. Two of the largest purchases ever made by the Trustees of the National Gallery for single pictures were when it gave, in 1857, £13,650 for a Paul Veronese—*The Family of Darius*—and £9,000 for a Madonna by Raphael. During the time of Sir Charles Eastlake, pictures for the National Gallery were bought at an average cost of under £700, and he need not, therefore, trouble the Committee with any comparison in respect of these works of Art. He would only give two examples of the largest prices ever paid for pictures, and then he thought the subject would have been placed pretty fully before the Committee. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, in conversation with a deputation which waited on him, had mentioned that he believed a Prince of Orange once bought a Rubens for £24,000. And in the extravagant times of the Second Empire, when Marshal Soult's Collection was brought to the hammer, there was an extraordinary contest between three great nations for his celebrated Murillo, and it brought 615,300 francs, or about £24,000. He thought these examples showed that there was reason for the Committee to pause before giving such a price for these pictures as was now asked. Now, with regard to the correspondence that had taken place. First of all he would refer to the requisition in favour of these purchases, signed by members of the Royal Academy, and forwarded to the Prime Minister by Sir Frederick Leighton. He did not wish to criticize minutely the verbiage of this Memorial, because artists were not disposed to take the same view of these matters as was taken by Members of Parliament, and it would be sufficient for him to say that on the occasion referred to the members of the Royal Academy avowed that they addressed the Prime Minister under "strong emotion." But he should like to say a word or two with reference to the letter addressed to the right hon. Gentleman by Sir Frederick Leighton, who said it would be impossible to overstate the anxiety felt by the whole artistic community—

"Partly because the occasion is one of an absolutely unique and unprecedented kind."

And he went on to say—

"We are accustomed to look to you as to one absolutely fearless in the carrying out of an elevated idea, and we believe that your championship will not be wanting to us on an occasion of which the like cannot recur, and in a cause which must on so many grounds commend itself to your inmost sympathies."

Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was not in the House at the moment; if he were, he believed he would say that there were financial and other reasons which should make him a little cautious in carrying out this elevated idea. However, he would pass from that; they were accustomed to emotional language when artists took to the pen. He came now to the second Memorial to the Prime Minister, from persons who he supposed were called the Art-supporters of the country, amongst whose names he saw that of the hon. Baronet the Member for Lisburn (Sir Richard Wallace). The Memorial did not recommend any sum to be given, but only asked the Government to keep in view the approaching disposal of this great Collection—

"The Directors of every Continental Museum," they said, "are on the alert, and all hope that some of the treasures of the Marlborough Collection will be added to their own walls."

On this he would say, had any foreign Government bought any of these pictures? Now, he was quite aware that the Government in this matter was under a very great difficulty, because it was quite impossible that the negotiations could be kept secret; but he thought he could show that persons inside and outside the House had increased the difficulties of the Government in making a bargain. He came now to another point—the proposal which the Trustees of the National Gallery sent to the Prime Minister. He believed that the Trustees had no part in the finances, and that the valuation of pictures entirely depended on the Director, and it was to a letter of that Director that he now asked the attention of the Committee. Sir Frederick Burton, Director and Financial Adviser, wrote to the Prime Minister, and his letter contained the following paragraph:—

"The value of any great production of genius in money is a thing not easily to be determined. It resolves itself simply into a question of what the vendor will take and the purchaser give for an article combining the highest qualities with extreme rarity. Considering that these conditions are fulfilled in those pictures which are now placed at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government, I cannot feel any hesitation in expressing my opinion that even the large sum of 400,000 guineas would not exceed their value, and that in accepting them at that price the nation would in the end be the gainer."

Those were the words of a gentleman who had the control of the financial arrangements of the National Gallery, and he could not but regret that such a letter was ever published, because, however valuable the opinion of Sir Frederick Burton might be, it would be impossible for him ever to obtain a picture in future at a moderate price. He now came to three letters which had passed between the National Gallery and the late Secretary to the Treasury and Mr. Barrington. It appeared from the letter that the Treasury seemed to have had the idea that the Trustees were supporting Sir Frederick Burton in the valuation of the pictures; but the letter of Mr. Eastlake, dated the 10th of June, showed that the Trustees very firmly declined any responsibility, and left the matter in the hands of Sir Frederick Burton. He passed to the second letter of Sir Frederick Burton, who professed to give an opinion as to the value of the pictures in the Collection if they were exposed to public competition. He valued 11 of the pictures at 268,500 guineas, and added—

"These prices united fall considerably short of the amount which the Duke of Marlborough demands for the whole. But it will be for Her Majesty's Government to consider whether this discrepancy, notwithstanding the associations connected with most of the works named in the list, and, far more, the fact that they are in this country, and that a feeling strong and universal prevails that they should, if at all possible, be retained in it, would not justify the acceptance of the terms offered by the Duke of Marlborough rather than that these invaluable works of Art should be lost to the present and future generations in England."

Therefore, it was clear that Sir Frederick Burton was quite ready to close, regardless of cost, the bargain for the pictures. As one versed in Art, his opinion was that these pictures were worth anything to the nation, though the vendor or his agent appeared to put forward no plea that they were considering the nation, or going to make the nation a donation. The whole thing was done simply in the hard-and-fast way of a bargain; the 11 pictures must be bought together, the Duke of Marlborough having declined to sell a smaller number at a proportionately lower price. On page 11 of the correspondence a very important stage of the negotiations was reached. There was the letter of the Prime Minister to the hon. Member for East Cumberland (Mr. G. Howard), one of the Trustees. But there was, of course, some former correspondence left out, because the letter began—

"I revert to the question of the Blenheim Pictures;"

it referred, probably, to correspondence which, like that of Sir Frederick Burton, was not adapted for publication. In that letter the Prime Minister said—

"We are, however, prepared to stretch a point to secure, if possible, the Raphael, and, perhaps, the Vandyke, together with the first on the list of the Rubens' (*The Garden of the Hesperides*): and I am in a position to authorize the Trustees to make an offer of £70,000 for the Raphael, or of £100,000 for the three pictures, subject, of course, to the sanction of Parliament."

Now, he would ask the attention of the Committee for a moment to the Memo-

randum of the proceedings of a deputation which waited on the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the 2nd of July last—that was to say, nearly a week after the Prime Minister had made up his mind. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not seem to be acquainted with what had taken place between the National Gallery and the Prime Minister; he received the deputation, accordingly, in a cautious and guarded way; he reminded them that the largest price ever paid for a picture was £24,000. And, although he said that he would inform the Government of the views of the deputation, he did not give them any hope that the purchase would be made; but on the 4th of July Mr. Eastlake wrote to the agent of the Duke of Marlborough, in accordance with the Prime Minister's decision, offering £70,000 for the one picture or £100,000 for the three. The Prime Minister, however, having made up his mind to stretch a point, did not stretch it further; but remained firm at the offer of £70,000. A sort of round-robin was signed, on the 4th of July, by several Members of that House, which, strange to say, was headed by the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), and for which he believed the hon. Member for Cricklade (Mr. Story-Maskelyne) was responsible. (Mr. Story-Maskelyne dissented.) Well, it was a most extraordinary document, and the words of one of its paragraphs were—

"The price [illegible] the Government to be prepared to offer for these [illegible] masterpieces [illegible] unprecedented, and so much [illegible] that we urge [illegible] the [illegible] and retained [illegible]."

He could hardly be [illegible] when this Memorial was passed round the Lobby, many of his hon. friends knew what they were signing. They were willing to pay £100,000 for two pictures for which the Prime Minister had offered a much lower sum, and he believed that the moral of this was that round-robins in the Lobby were rather to be avoided, because hon. Members were not likely to be always quite satisfied when the result of their recommendation appeared in the Estimates. The result of the deputation to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the account of the round-robin being sent to the Prime Minister, of course, got to the knowledge of Mr. Davis, the agent managing the sale for the Duke of Marlborough; and the effect of this was a letter from Mr. Davis, dated 147, New Bond Street, the 5th of July, to Mr. Eastlake, mentioning that he was instructed by His Grace to say that—

"He has reason to believe that there are other purchasers for these pictures."

In short, the bargain was entirely repudiated. Therefore, he thought he was justified in saying that the round-robin did not assist the Prime Minister in obtaining the pictures at a more moderate price. Then he came nearly to the end of the negotiation. On the 12th of July the Secretary to the Treasury again wrote to the Trustees and Director of the National Gallery, stating that the Treasury were prepared to submit a Vote to Parliament for £85,000 for the purchase of the two paintings. The offer was then repeated by Mr. Eastlake to Mr. Davis, who, finding that the Prime Minister was firm at the offer of £70,000 for the Raphael, and that he could get no more money, on August 9 closed with the offer, and the purchase was settled. There then remained only the Vandyke, and he was sorry to say that all this grandiloquent correspondence had a very shabby ending. The Government offered £15,000 for it, and the agent wanted more, and the result of that was that they did what other vendors and purchasers generally did under similar circumstances—they split the difference, and the picture was bought for £17,500. He believed he had shown that this was a question which the Committee ought to consider; and having thought very carefully whether he ought to propose to diminish the Vote, he was afraid that his only course would be to divide the Committee on the question whether this purchase ought to be completed or not. If, in taking that course, he carried the Committee with him, he should have the satisfaction of having saved the country a large expenditure; and if he did not succeed in doing so, he should have made his protest against the Vote, which protest might have some effect in

deterring other Governments from paying these large sums under similar circumstances on future occasions. He believed that a Vote of this kind could always be obtained if the subject could be considered sufficient to attract public attention; but he would remind the Committee that if they inquired at the public Institutions, they would be frequently told that the money at the disposal of the managers was insufficient to enable them to take proper measures for the display of their Collections. He believed that if one-tenth of the sum now asked for were spent on the arrangements of their National Collections, more benefit would accrue to Science and Art than would result from the possession of the objects for which this sensational Vote was demanded. Finally, there was one observation which he wished to make. Mr. Frederick Harrison, one of the deputation which waited on the Chancellor of the Exchequer on that occasion, was reported to have spoken warmly of the interest shown by the working classes, especially in the North of England, in the Collections at Nottingham, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, and other towns, and to have expressed the opinion that they were invariably in favour of the purchase of great works of Art, even at very high prices, when recommended by those who were conversant with such matters; and Lord Aberdare also pointed out that no act of Mr. Lowe's, while Chancellor of the Exchequer, was more popular than the purchase of the Peel Collection. It seemed to him (Mr. Cubitt) that there was an advantage to the classes referred to in the arrangement recently made to distribute works of Art over the country under certain conditions, and that this would be more prized by the working classes than extravagant purchases of this kind.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the right hon. Gentleman had concluded with the remark that the Government should, as far as possible, carry out a system of lending works of Art from the Metropolis to the Provinces. In certain cases that had been done, and he was sure that his noble Friend the President of the Committee of Council on Education would do all that lay in his power to extend the application of that principle. The right hon. Gentleman had remarked that this was an extravagant purchase; but he also combined with that remark a very curious suggestion on the point of economy. He said in effect—"If you do carry out this purchase, by all means do not stop any future Vote for the purchase of pictures."

MR. CUBITT: I referred to pictures that could be bought for an ordinary sum.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he did not see any difference between an ordinary sum and a large sum; but, as a matter of fact, the right hon. Gentleman did suggest what was the reverse of economy. The simple narrative of the whole transaction was that the National Gallery was avowedly deficient in the highest examples of Art. The unfortunate dispersal of the Gallery of Charles I., which scattered some of the most important works of the great Masters all over Europe, had been a great misfortune to this country; and the result was that while at the Louvre, at Madrid, at Dresden, at Florence, at the Hermitage, and elsewhere, there were great and worthy examples of Raphael, there was in the National Gallery nothing approaching to what this country ought to possess of this Master, if it desired to have a Gallery of the great Masters fairly emulating the Galleries abroad. When this proposal, therefore, for the sale of the Blenheim Collection was made to them, he confessed that the sympathies of the Government were strongly in favour of purchasing one or two great works, provided they could make this purchase on terms which should appear to them reasonable, having regard to the price of pictures at the present time. The *Ansidei Madonna* was certainly a picture of a most remarkable character in connection with the life of Raphael and the three different manners through which his painting passed; and he thought those who had seen his pictures, especially in Italy and other foreign capitals, would agree with him in saying that this picture was an example of extreme value, and one which, if it could be bought at a reasonable price, should not be lost to the country. He believed the Government were asked, in the first instance, £160,000 for this picture; it was valued then by Sir Frederick Burton at 110,000 guineas, and, whatever the right hon. Gentleman might say, Sir Frederick Burton was a

great authority; and the Government came to the conclusion, after carefully considering what had been paid, not in former, but of late years, for great works of Art, and the continuing increase in their value—knowing something of what was going on with respect to offers for these pictures contemplated by other persons, that they might offer £70,000, and having decided to make that offer they never departed from it. They made the offer, in the first instance, on the 6th of June. The Duke of Marlborough persisted in his demand until early in August, and, when he found the Government were firm, accepted the offer. They could not have got the picture for less; and the question, therefore, was whether they should offer £70,000 for this remarkable example of Raphael, or allow it to go to one of the great Collections on the Continent. They believed that the House would support them under the circumstances in making the offer of £70,000, subject to their sanction. The Duke of Marlborough knew that the offer was made subject to the approval of the House, and would have no ground for complaint if that approval was withheld; but Her Majesty's Government, knowing that the offer was a fair one, had no hesitation in asking the House for the amount of the Vote.

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, he had very few remarks to make upon this subject. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Cubitt) had done a very good service in drawing attention to this matter. Hon. Members ought to recollect that there were two sides to questions of this sort—people were apt to be carried away into a large expenditure, and next year, perhaps, something equally valuable and attractive cropped up, and equally likely to go abroad if it was not bought; and unless there was some control over these matters, it was very likely that they would be led away into further expense, and placed in a difficult position. Now, the Committee should consider the position of the National Gallery. It was of very great advantage to the country no doubt, associated as it was with South Kensington. The National Gallery was established in 1824 for the purpose of forming a receptacle for public gifts. It was formed with the Angerstein Collection, which was for some time exhibited in Pall Mall. Mr. Thomas Baring, in 1871—when the Peel Collection was brought before the public with a view to purchase—moved for a Return of the money which the nation had spent, and what they had acquired by purchase and gift since the formation of the Institution. That Return showed that, from 1824 to 1870, a period of 45 years, the House of Commons had voted as the largest amount in any one Vote £75,000 for one of the most valuable and beautiful Collections that had ever been acquired—a Collection of 70 pictures, called the Peel Collection—to which amount was to be added the annual cost of other purchases, amounting to about £7,800, which brought up the total expenditure to £437,000 for the time named. The Return further showed that, during the 45 years which had elapsed since the National Gallery was established, there had been presented to the nation 284 pictures; that 256 had been bequeathed and 313 purchased. The cost of the 313 pictures purchased amounted, at that date, to £254,527, or an average price of £800 each for the whole of those valuable works. It was delightful to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer speaking with such freedom from the considerations which usually restrained the right hon. Gentleman; but he (Sir Gabriel Goldney) said that the history of the National Gallery showed that they ought to limit their expenditure upon it to a certain amount every year, or they would be carried away too far by the fear of losing some valuable work of Art, which it would be said the country ought to secure at any price. The House should, in his opinion, determine that expenditure on these matters should be limited to a certain sum per annum.

MR. STORY-MASKELYNE said, that, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Surrey had imported his name into the debate, he would ask the attention of the Committee for a few minutes. He did not shrink from owning that his hand was in the document quoted by the right hon. Gentleman; that he drew it up with the advice of some friends; and he was happy to say it received the signatures of influential Members on both sides of the House, including hon. Friends of his own, who represented the working classes in an especial manner. He thought the

last observations of the hon. Member who had just sat down were very well worthy the attention of the Committee; and he might add that the desirability of taking some steps in the direction indicated had been present to his mind for some little time past. That, however, he did not think had anything to do with the question before the Committee. That question was whether, with regard to the two pictures, the hon. Members who had memorialized the Treasury had been acting in an extravagant spirit, carried away by emotion, or whether the proposal to purchase them was the result of long and careful consideration—whether, in short, those who urged the Government to take action were not actuated by a proper and just idea of what they owed at once to Art and to the principles of economy? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Cubitt) had been kind enough to read some of the clauses of the document which had been signed by hon. Members with regard to those pictures; but he had omitted to read the last clause, which was the most important one of all, in which they said—

"We assure the Government that, to the best of our belief, our constituents and the whole nation will approve and applaud an expenditure, even though so large, for the special object in view; because it will be known that whatever price is paid will have been the result of much negotiation at the hands of the responsible Advisers of the Government."

For his own part, he had been perfectly willing to leave the matter in the hands of the Government, and that they should decide what was the fair price that should be paid for these unique pictures. The Raphael was a unique picture, and the occasion of such a picture coming into the market was also unique; and they had, therefore, advised the Government to step out of the economical position which they usually occupied, and purchase the picture. He and his hon. Friends were not ashamed of that advice. He knew the picture, and had seen it illuminated with a powerful light in the splendid palace of Blenheim; and he could only say that if there were a Raphael in the world which illustrated the pictorial art in its highest form in the age of Raphael it was the picture in question. He need not go into the reasons which gave this picture its special value in the history of the development of painting as exhibited in Raphael's work; he would only say that for wealth of colour it was, perhaps, the finest Raphael in the world. Such a picture placed on the walls of the National Gallery would be not for to-day or to-morrow, but for all days. In that Gallery it would be seen not only by the wealthy, who had pictures of their own, but by those who had not the opportunity of seeing such supreme works of Art elsewhere. During the 20 years that he was at the head of a department at the British Museum, he had observed what had been the effect from year to year of the increase in the number of works of high type, representing the noble Arts of Greece and Rome. He knew that its effect had been to increase the number of visitors of the artizan class, as well as of other classes; and they showed, by their scrutiny, the highest appreciation of them. Such scrutiny and the cultivation of taste which was born of it was one of the factors, and no small one, in the culture of a nation, and in a kind of culture which our nation greatly needs. But the question must be looked at from the point of view of the effect it was to have upon the England, not of to-day only, but of the future. In one of the Natural History Departments of the British Museum, the collection belonging to which he largely formed, the most gratifying result was that he found that by degrees students came from Germany, America, France, and Italy to study and explore it, because, as they said, they were not educated in their science until they had studied that Collection. It was the same with the Art Collections in the Museums and National Gallery. The National Gallery had one unique advantage; the Collection had not been made by Kings and wealthy nobles, but, in a large degree, by men who were themselves artists, who knew Art in its highest form and in all its characters. It was made by men who meant it to be a History of Art, who intended it to be a Collection to which the student of Art could go to find an education; and where, no less, the wayfarer outside the profession of the artist could find a historical sequence in the Schools of Art and illustrations of the great Masters' work in each, whereby he might be led on step by step to a real enjoyment of the

highest and noblest works of Art. He hoped every Member of the House appreciated this aspect of the National Collection; he was persuaded that none appreciated it more than some of those who represented the artizan constituencies in the country. Those hon. Gentlemen were always ready to acknowledge the good they derived from a visit to the National Gallery. He was sorry for having detained the Committee so long; but he hoped he had given some reasons for having drawn up the Memorial which had been referred to, in not very complimentary terms, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Cubitt).

MR. GEORGE HOWARD said, the opinions of the Trustees of the National Gallery had been expressed very much in the Correspondence which had been published; but he should like to say a few words in justification of those opinions, and to explain away a few inferences which had been drawn from them by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cubitt). Of course, he could not say that the price proposed to be paid for the pictures was not a very large one indeed, but the real question was not whether the price was large, but whether the pictures were worth the money—whether they were paying for them now a price which they would not be able to get them for in a few years. He thought that this might be illustrated by what had been already alluded to. The largest price ever paid for a collection of pictures for the National Gallery was that paid for Sir Robert Peel's Collection. £75,000 was given for that Collection 15 years ago. At the time that sum was considered enormous, and, as had been said by an hon. Gentleman opposite, the Government, in giving it were considered to be acting very generously in the interest of Art and Education. He, however, had the very highest authority for stating that the present market value of that Collection was not £75,000, but £200,000. Now, if they could look for a rise in the value of their National pictures at all equivalent to that in the case of Sir Robert Peel's pictures, it was almost impossible to calculate what the value of those particular pictures would be in a few years time, because, although the pictures of Sir Robert Peel were masterpieces in themselves, they were pictures by Masters whose works were from time to time in the market in considerable numbers, whereas those pictures were absolutely unique. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cubitt) talked as if pictures turned up like products of Nature; but the Trustees of the National Gallery knew with absolute exactitude what pictures of those Masters there were in the world, and they could confidently say that the pictures in question were absolutely unique. The great picture by Raphael could, in the opinion of the best authorities, rank second only to one in Europe; he did not think there was another picture by Raphael that could be put above it in value, unless it were that at Dresden. The state of a picture was a matter which greatly affected its value; and the state of this picture was more perfect than that of any other easel picture by Raphael. The purchase of the great Vandyke had, perhaps, been more criticized than the purchase of Raphael; but he thought that the purchase recommended itself to the artistic world. It was a great equestrian picture, ranking with those by Titian or Velasquez at Madrid. Although Vandyke was a foreigner, he was said to be the father of English painting. An hon. Friend of his said, the other day—"We do not care for any more Vandykes, because we can see Vandykes in any English manor house." But, as his hon. Friend the Member for Chichester (Mr. Story-Maskelyne) had said, "it was not everybody who had access to manor houses." Beyond that, he (Mr. G. Howard) would say it was just because there were so many imitations of Vandyke in England that it was eminently desirable to have the masterpieces of that painter in their National Gallery. He remembered that people used to say—"If you want to know what Vandyke could paint you should go to Genoa." Again, it was not possible for everyone to go to Genoa, and even if it were they would not see such a picture as the Government proposed to purchase. The unrivalled excellence of these pictures was generally admitted, but it was thought that an extravagant price was being paid for them. Great as the price was, in his opinion, it was not at all an extravagant one; indeed, he had reason to believe that one of the greatest foreign authorities on painting had expressed the opinion that a Raphael would probably

sell at the present moment for £100,000. It was certainly a curious thing that many years ago, when one of the former Directors of the National Gallery entered into communication with the late Duke of Marlborough on the subject of the Raphael, that he expressed the opinion that, from what he had heard, he believed the value of the picture was £100,000. That was a good many years ago, when the value of pictures was not so high as it was at present. He (Mr. G. Howard) would not go into the Correspondence in detail, because the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Cubitt) had dealt with it at sufficient length. He would just allude to one or two points in it. The right hon. Gentleman had said that Sir Frederick Burton was an extravagant valuer of pictures, and he founded the statement upon a list of prices which Sir Frederick had sent in to the Prime Minister. He (Mr. G. Howard) would point out, in the first place, that it was a very difficult thing —in fact, Sir Frederick himself said that it was almost an impossible thing —to price a picture of this character. Before an exact price could be fixed, it would be necessary for them to know more about the probable competitors, if the picture were put up to auction, than it was possible to know when the sale was a private one. Sir Frederick Burton had given what he believed to be the amount that the picture would fetch if exposed to general competition. A certain number of the pictures priced by Sir Frederick had since that time been sold. There was a list of nine pictures, which Sir Frederick Burton had valued at £83,000, and of these seven had been sold—he said seven, but, as a matter of fact, one—an inferior picture—was not on the list. However, six of that list had been sold, and the seven disposed of in the open market had fetched, not £83,000, but £98,350. That was the sum actually paid for them—a far larger figure than had been estimated by Sir Frederick Burton. It was a regrettable circumstance that these masterpieces had gone abroad. Perhaps it was inevitable, but, at all events, it proved that there were foreign competitors ready to give large sums, much larger than we ourselves were ready to give, for the pictures. It must not be forgotten that in some respects the present moment was an unfortunate one for the Duke of Marlborough to have selected for the sale of his pictures. The Berlin Government had—he did not know whether last year or the year before, but at any rate quite recently—given something like £90,000 for a collection of manuscripts, one of which was a sketch-book of Botticelli, containing illustrations of Dante. Germany was a great country, but was supposed to be managed most economically, yet it did not consider £90,000 an extravagant sum for a sketch-book. We ought to be thankful to the German Government for the use they had made of the sketch-book, for they had published reproductions of the sketches; but if these pictures of the Duke of Marlborough had gone abroad, it would not have been possible for us to have obtained reproductions, and no idea of them could have been obtained by ourselves or future generations without going abroad to see them. It was unfortunate for the Duke of Marlborough that Germany had made a large investment, because, no doubt, it had crippled them in regard to other purchases, and had rendered them unable to compete for the purchase of the Blenheim pictures. It was not unreasonable to suppose, also, that there might have been some feeling on the part of purchasers that the English Government had a certain priority in the purchase of these pictures. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cubitt) had been good enough to take the National Gallery under his protection, and to say that they ought not to be cut off from their annual grant. He (Mr. G. Howard) hoped that attention would be paid to what the right hon. Gentleman had said in that respect. He should like to point out that, on the one hand, the right hon. Gentleman had represented the managers of the National Gallery as anxious at any price, totally disregarding economy, to obtain this grant of money for the purchase of the pictures; but that, on the other hand, he forgot that, in making that recommendation, the Trustees of the National Gallery had this fully before their eyes, and yet preferred to run the risk of losing the grant rather than lose what they believed to be a unique opportunity. He thought that their willingness to obtain the pictures at that sacrifice, however reluctant they might have been to lose their an-

nual grant, showed that their opinion had not been formed recklessly and impulsively, as had been suggested, but had been a deliberate one. The right hon. Gentleman had also detailed the measures which he thought would be useful for educational purposes in the way of the circulation of works of Art and in the management of their Galleries, in order to make works of Art more valuable to the public. For his own part, he agreed with much that the right hon. Gentleman had said about what should be done for the purpose of education. Much had been done, and much more could still be done; but he thought that people were rather apt to undervalue the great educational effect of the best works of Art being available to the Art students. In that respect, he believed that the National Gallery stood very high. It was a remarkably complete historical Collection; but what was wanted, above all, as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had pointed out, was a few great masterpieces. Year by year the managers of the National Gallery had made their Collection of pictures more complete in an historical and educational sense; but, to perfect it, it had rather wanted some great masterpieces in order to have a full representation of what was absolutely the best in Art Although opinions and fashions were fluctuating things, they did not at all fluctuate in regard to the highest names in Art; and he believed that, by becoming possessors of these pictures, the Government would be putting their National Collection in an absolutely unassailable position. The number of Art students at the National Gallery was increasing year by year, and this year rather more than 100 students were engaged in copying the pictures in the National Gallery over and above the number so engaged last year. Then there was one personal matter upon which he begged permission to say a few words. It had been suggested, because the Prime Minister's letter to him in regard to the Blenheim pictures began rather abruptly, that some communication had passed which the managers of the National Gallery did not wish to have published. Nothing could be a greater mistake. As the communications had been going on from day to day, and as the Trustees of the National Gallery only met from time to time, he (Mr. G. Howard) had very naturally, as the only Trustee at that time in the House of Commons, communicated the information received to Members of the Government whom he had seen in the House. He believed that the Prime Minister's letter to himself was in answer to a letter from him (Mr. G. Howard), in which he had stated that he believed there was then a chance of purchasing the two pictures separately, the Duke of Marlborough having before that refused to treat for them except in one collection. It, however, appeared that the noble Duke had changed his mind, and he Mr. G. Howard communicated that fact to the Prime Minister, and this letter was the right hon. Gentleman's answer. There was nothing which could not have been fully published to the House in the matter. He had nothing more to say; and in conclusion he would merely observe that he felt absolutely convinced that if this opportunity had been lost they would not have had another of getting a picture or pictures of that class again.

Mr. SLATER-BOOTH said, he did not suppose the Committee desired this debate to be prolonged; and he certainly had no wish to detain it for more than a few moments. He felt, however, that he must, for one, express his thanks to his right hon. Friend near him (Mr. Cubitt) for bringing this question before the Committee. It was quite reasonable and proper that such a question should be debated there; and he was sure the Government itself would not have desired a Vote of that kind to pass without comment. There were two or three things to be deprecated in connection with this purchase. In the first place the country, no doubt, through its great wealth, by its action in this matter, had tended to raise the value of pictures in the market. It had done this by giving a price higher than could be given by any private purchaser. It was evident that the price originally asked for these pictures was something exorbitant. It had been brought down by the firmness of the Prime Minister to a comparatively moderate amount, although he thought it was still excessive—so that he could not help thinking that if the Treasury had been left alone a still smaller price would have been agreed upon. But the economical instincts of

the Treasury could not be trusted, and a deputation of distinguished persons had waited upon the Government in order to stimulate them to make the purchase, and they had besides a round-robin signed by Members in the Lobby of that House for the same object—a practice which he thought was to be more honoured in the breach than in the observance. The round-robin was intended to strengthen the hands of the Government; but who could doubt that when great pictures were in the market, the artistic world would be more inclined to stimulate than depreciate their value? Who could doubt that, under the circumstances, the prices would be enormously raised? He remembered that a considerable sensation was caused at the enormous amount of £23,000 being given by the French Government for Marshal Soult's *Murillo*. From that time to this no such sum had ever been given for a single picture. The value of the Duke of Marlborough's Raphael was not fixed by any consideration as to what it was worth, but in view simply of what the Treasury could be persuaded to give. That was a matter of precedent. So far as the intrinsic value of the picture was concerned, he could not, of course, pretend to offer an opinion; but he would say, with regard to the National Gallery, that probably no one frequented it more often than he did himself, or had taken a greater interest in it for a long period of time; and he must admit that pictures of this class were the one thing needed to make it complete. The Collection was an extremely interesting one, and an extremely valuable one, and he thought more valuable from not being too large. It was valuable to the English people because it had been built up, not by extravagant purchases at one time, but generally by purchases made from year to year out of an annual Vote. If the Committee were willing to pass the present Vote, he thought it ought not to be done at the cost of the annual grant of £10,000. It did not follow that because that sum was voted annually it was necessary always to spend it; but he considered that their National Collection of pictures, such as it was, owed its chief merit and distinctive character to purchases made in the market from time to time in the natural way. With regard to the Vandyke, the price at which it was to be obtained was, he must own, a large sum to give for a picture, which, however fine, was not unique, there being many similar to it in the country. There was one in Burlington House—a portrait of Charles I. on horseback. There was one at Windsor and one at Highclere. In conclusion, he wished to express his obligations to his right hon. Friend for having drawn attention to this Vote, and to say that, if he went to a division, he should support him.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS said, he did not rise to say one word as to whether it was expedient or not for the nation to purchase these pictures; but as he was one of the Trustees for the Blenheim estate, and guardian of the Marquess of Blandford, he thought he might be permitted to say what his views were upon the subject. In 1883 a large sum was offered for 12 of the Blenheim pictures, and in 1884 application was made to the Court of Chancery, under Lord Cairns's Act, for permission to negotiate their sale. There was a reasonable expectation of obtaining a sum of certainly £400,000 for the 12 pictures. This application was granted by the Court of Chancery; but when, under the terms of the order, the Duke of Marlborough applied to the Court to sanction the sale of the Ansidei Raphael and the Vandyke portrait of Charles I. to the Government for £70,000 and £17,500 respectively, he (Mr. Marjoribanks) and his co-Trustee thought it their duty to oppose the application to the utmost, on the ground of the entire inadequacy of the price offered by the Government. He wished to express his decided opinion that if the Duke of Marlborough had been more firm in the matter he might have obtained a much larger sum for the Raphael and Vandyke than he had agreed to accept. He (Mr. Marjoribanks) did not mean to say that the noble Duke would necessarily have obtained it from the Government. He believed—and he wished to express the opinion—that the country, in obtaining these two pictures at the price they were giving for them, were obtaining them at much below what would have been given for them elsewhere.

Mr. RUSTON said, he would not trouble the Committee for any length of time; but he wished to express the satisfaction with which he had heard the eloquent vindication of the Vote which had fallen from the hon. Member for

Cricklade (Mr. Story-Maskelyne). He did not want to depreciate the bargain the Government had made, and was sorry that the Committee was to be divided on the subject. He trusted that the hon. Gentleman's remarks would have the effect of removing the impression that existed in some quarters amongst Gentlemen who were disposed to question the wisdom of this Vote. He did not regard this as a question as to whether one more picture or two should be added to their National Collection. That was a small matter, though he was not, of course, disposed to undervalue it. The study of such noble works as the Blenheim Raphael was distinctly elevating, no doubt; but he wished to regard this proposal in the light of that great educational movement which was going on in this country, and more particularly in connection with Art. Hon. Members would be able to carry their minds back 35 years, to the time of the Exhibition of 1851. That Exhibition convinced the people and Government of this country that we were very much behind not only in Art matters, but especially in those manufactures in which artistic treatment entered at all; and he believed that it was on account of the enlightenment that Exhibition gave them that the Government inaugurated, he might say, a new era in regard to Art in this country. They established the Schools of Art, under that distinguished man, Sir Henry Cole. These schools had become established in almost every important town in the country; and hon. Gentlemen knew as well as he did what were the wonderful results they had accomplished. The manufactures of this country in which the element of solidity mainly entered, had always held their own, because of the peculiar advantages which they as a nation enjoyed, but in those manufactures in which Art treatment was required they were defeated, and behind their foreign competitors. It was therefore precisely in those branches of manufacture in which Art treatment was essential, that this great revival of Art had brought their manufactures to a level with those of other countries. What had been the consequence of all this? Let Gentlemen look at their own houses. "Order, order!" He did not wish to transgress—he simply desired to show what was the influence of Art-teaching on the country, and how necessary it was that high ideals should be placed before those who had to study Art in the country. But he would pass from that, and would say that if the country was to maintain its place in the competition with foreign nations, they must, as far as they could, place before their workers the highest Art ideals that could be obtained. This Raphael, which had been so much spoken of, was, he believed, although he had not seen it, a wonderful picture. Certainly the price to be given for it was enormous; but whether or not it was an extravagant one depended upon what it was possible to get the picture for. If someone else was prepared to give £70,000 for it, £70,000 was the price the British Government could purchase it for on preference. Considering, therefore, that this was a unique occasion, and considering the wonderful stimulus this kind of purchase gave to the study of Art in the country, and looking upon its effects on the manufactures of Great Britain, he thought the occasion was one of which they ought to avail themselves. If they did not avail themselves of it, it would pass irretrievably away. As their manufactures increased and flourished, so did their artizans by the millions flourish; and it was on their behalf more than on behalf of the wealthy, who could go to the Picture Galleries when they chose, and who had the advantage of having pictures in their own homes, that he heartily supported the Vote.

Mr. AGNEW confessed that it was with much surprise and regret he saw the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Surrey (Mr. Cubitt) placing himself in front of the opposition to this Vote. Many in the House must know that the right hon. Gentleman was a distinguished connoisseur in matters of Art, that he was in possession of artistic heirlooms, and that he was himself a collector of works of Art of no mean distinction. He did not, however, gather from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that he objected to the purchase of this picture under any circumstances, but rather—though not expressed in words, and judging from the tone of his remarks—that he objected to the price to be paid. It appeared to him (Mr. Agnew) that there were two points before the Committee—first, was the Gro-

vernment justified in seeking to acquire these precious examples of Raphael and Vandyke? If so, was the price which the Government contracted to pay more than the value of the pictures? He believed that no Government, in any civilized country, would have done other than depart from its true and proper functions if it had permitted, without making an effort to acquire them, such works to be deported. He confessed that since he had had the honour of a seat in that House he had never given a vote with greater pleasure and satisfaction than the vote he should give in favour of this purchase. And why was that? It was because he believed that the country was getting more than value for its money. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth), in his remarks, had said—"Where is the person who has offered to give £70,000, or more than £70,000, for the Raphael, and why does he not come forward?" Well, he (Mr. Agnew) asked the House—this House of Commons, composed of English Gentlemen—whether there was a Member in it, or one of their countrymen out of it, who would have ventured to enter into negotiations with the Duke of Marlborough for the purchase of these pictures until it was certain that all negotiations between His Grace and the Government were at an end? In reference to what had been said about private individuals buying the pictures, he knew, as a matter of fact, that many persons were prepared to negotiate. He might tell the Committee without any breach of confidence, that, on behalf of a distinguished American, the firm of which he was a member had been invited to enter into negotiations for the purchase of this Raphael; and he took no credit to himself for having, to use a vulgar commonplace, shown the "cold shoulder" to his American client. He believed the picture to be worth a larger sum than £70,000; and that if it were offered for sale in any auction room in Europe it would command a much larger price than the Government proposed to give for it. A great deal of stress had been laid upon the fact that, 30 years ago, Soult's *Murillo* was sold for £24,000. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cubitt) was not correct in his facts when he said that the competition for that picture rested between the French and Spanish Governments. That was not so. It was a fact that an English nobleman was one of the competitors for the picture, and the penultimate bidder for it. The right hon. Gentleman knew well enough that during the last 30 years the value of works of Art had quadrupled—nay, quintupled. Twenty-five or 30 years ago high-class pictures could be obtained with comparative ease; but what was the state of things now? Important cities like Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, established public Galleries, and others devoted annually large sums of money for the acquisition of pictures. They found in the Colonies Melbourne and Sydney National Galleries established, and they saw these Galleries in Boston, St. Louis, New York, and other places in the United States; and did hon. Members suppose for a moment that those who were interested in the formation of those Galleries were indifferent to the acquisition of pictures of the highest class? He repeated that the value of works of this class had more than quintupled within the last 25 years. There could be no comparison whatever between the two pictures in point of Art or educational value, there being a great gulf between the Art of Raphael and that of Murillo. He did not desire to detain the Committee a moment longer. He regretted very much that the tone of the speech made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Cubitt) had been to disparage the Director of the National Gallery; and he would take this opportunity of expressing his opinion that the administration of the National Gallery had been an immense success. Of course, the Director and Trustees of that Institution had no greater claim to being immaculate than any other set of men, and there could be no doubt that they had made mistakes; but, at the same time, he did believe that there was no Department of the Government, and no public matters connected with the National interest, that had been better safeguarded than had the interests of the English people in the National Gallery. Sir Frederick Burton was a very distinguished man; and although he was not supposed to be what might be termed an appraiser—for it was not expected of the Director of the National Gallery that he should know to a hair the value of

any particular work of Art which the Trustees might desire to possess—he felt bound to say that the nation had every right to be satisfied with the administration of the National Gallery. He trusted, therefore, that the Committee generally, or, at least, a considerable number of hon. Members, would agree with him in saying that when the two pictures they were then discussing were placed in the National Gallery, in point of general excellence and distinctive character, there was no Gallery in any city in Europe that would be in a prouder position than their own. The Committee should understand that the Raphael was not a small picture. As a good many hon. Members had probably never seen it, he would tell them that it was not a picture that could be put under Mr. Speaker's Chair; but a large composition of a quality unsurpassed by anything in the Kingdom. Indeed, he had no hesitation in saying it was a more valuable picture, twice told, than any other picture in the United Kingdom, and that there was no picture in Europe by the great Master that was in the same state of perfection; while there was not one, with the single exception of that which an hon. Member below him had already referred to—the *Madonna di San Sisto* at Dresden—that could compare with it for a moment in point either of quality or value. He regretted very much that there should be any division of opinion on this Vote; but he had little doubt that the Committee would, by a substantial majority, give its assent to the Motion of the Government.

MR. COPE said, he was of opinion that that House and the country generally were under a deep debt of gratitude to the Government for having availed themselves of the unique and unexampled opportunity which had been offered them of securing for the nation the two most magnificent works of Art to which the Vote under discussion related. The *Madonna* was, he believed, one of the finest that had been produced by Raphael. At any rate, there was only one other work in the world by that great Master that could be compared with it; and with regard to the Vandyke, it was the finest equestrian painting that Master had ever painted. It was true that the National Gallery already possessed one of the finest portraits Vandyke had ever produced; but the picture it was proposed to purchase would prove a very valuable adjunct. In his opinion, the purchase of the Peel Collection was one on which the nation might congratulate itself; and when the country had obtained the addition of these two magnificent paintings it would possess a National Gallery of which it might well be proud. He had listened with considerable interest to the hon. Member opposite (Mr. G. Howard), who was one of the Trustees of the National Gallery, for any remarks from him on such a subject must necessarily receive great attention in that House. He might say that they were very much indebted to the management of the National Gallery on other accounts. They had lately arranged the pictures in that building in schools, and they had also placed servants in uniform in the rooms, so that the public could know them, and address to them any inquiries they might wish to make; whereas, before this was done, the visitors did not know who they were to put questions to when they desired information. He regretted that the Trustees of the National Gallery had not taken the same course as had been followed by the Trustees of the South Kensington Museum, as well as by the Trustees of the British Museum, but which he was glad to find was now being tentatively undertaken; and he trusted that when the National Gallery had acquired the two magnificent works for which the present Vote was asked they would constitute another inducement to the Trustees to offer the public every opportunity of viewing those great artistic creations which belonged to the nation, and which the people ought not to be debarred from seeing on all available occasions. If the Committee went to a division on this Vote, he had no doubt there would be a large majority in favour of the proposed acquisition. He regarded the proposal as one of those which the Prime Minister would, on reflection, regard as one of his last and best acts.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST desired to say a few words before the Committee went to a division on this Vote. He did not think that this was a time when the country should be asked to spend £70,000 on a picture, however much it might be worth the money. It was proposed to increase the Army by 15,000

men, and it was also intended to expend large sums on a considerable addition to the Navy. There was a war at present going on in the Soudan, and, perhaps, there might soon be another in Afghanistan; and he certainly did not think that this was a moment when the nation should be called upon to spend £83,000 on pictures. He had no doubt that the pictures it was proposed to purchase were works of very great value; but, at the same time, he could not overlook the fact that they had had those pictures in the country for a great many years, and, as far as he was aware, the public had not shown so much interest in them as should induce the Committee to spend so large a sum of money upon them. Besides, there was no reason to suppose they would otherwise leave the country. He was strongly opposed to this Vote. Moreover, there was another point that had struck him with regard to this matter, and which, he thought, would demonstrate most plainly the inadvisability of making the proposed expenditure. In this country they were occasionally subjected to fearful outrages by the use of dynamite; and if pictures of so costly a description were to be purchased, and put into the National Gallery, some ruffian might walk in and blow to nothing in a moment those valuable works. He would advise the Committee not to spend the money asked for, and, for his own part, he should oppose the Vote.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY regretted that the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken should have said what might be taken as furnishing hints to the enemies of this country to go and destroy a really inestimable piece of property, on which the nation was about to spend the large sum of £70,000. But, passing away from this point, he rose with a feeling of astonishment at its being possible for anyone to hold that hon. Gentlemen on that (the Opposition) side of the House were going to such lengths as to oppose the present Vote. He hoped that hon. Members who thought so would find themselves greatly disappointed. His own reasons for supporting the Vote were that, according to the information he possessed, the picture for which it was proposed to give £70,000 was a work, not merely of the greatest Master that ever lived, but one belonging to a class of that Master's of which there were no other examples that had not found their way into public Galleries. The natural consequence was that the picture was one that could not be expected to come into the market—he would not say, in 10 or in 100 years—but at any future period. In his opinion, it would even be good policy, were it not rendered impossible by what had happened of late years, to borrow the money to buy the pictures rather than refuse to pass the Vote. He hoped the Committee would not regard with any feeling of impatience the further development of this discussion, because for once it happened to be engaged in discussing a pleasant subject.

Mr. MAGNIAC said, an hon. Member had made use of an exceedingly curious argument in relation to this Vote; because he seemed to think that it was too much to spend £70,000 on a picture for the National Gallery in comparison with the sum that had to be expended on an iron-clad which would only last a few years. The fact was that the National Gallery had only cost £300,000 altogether, and ought to be regarded as worth much more than an iron-clad. For his own part, he could not conceive of a greater loss, in an artistic sense, than to allow the Raphael picture to go out of the country, which he believed would have been the case had not an agreement been come to with Her Majesty's Government that it should be purchased for the nation. In his opinion, the Government were entitled to great credit for the negotiation, which they had conducted with a boldness that he must confess had rather astonished him. He thought that, in not refusing to purchase the picture at a price which he believed others would have given for it, they were deserving of the greatest praise. He believed he knew what would have happened had they refrained from seizing the opportunity thus afforded. There would have been a perfect howl of indignation if the Government had taken such a course. This country had an Art future before it; but it had a great deal to learn. It was undoubtedly, at the present time, a good deal behind many parts of the Continent in this respect. It had, however, learnt much, and he hoped it would learn a great deal more. Whereas only 20 years ago they had to go abroad for artists and designers for their manu-

factories, they were now furnishing designers to foreign manufacturers. Were they to let their national glory stand still? For his part, he looked forward to the time when they would see this country on a level with the glories of Dresden and Paris, which, however, was not the case now. They had, unfortunately, lost a great opportunity of making additions to their National Collection that were now at St. Petersburg. Still they had made a great advance, and he had no hesitation in saying that the South Kensington Museum would, at the present time, fetch five times what it had already cost, and that if put up to auction its contents would realize 400 per cent on the amount that had been expended upon them. Referring to what had been said about iron-clads, he wished to point out that while £500,000 was not grudged for one of those vessels, which could last but for a few years, the £300,000 that had been spent on the National Gallery would last for all time. He hoped pains would be taken to show the country the great advantage it would derive from this Vote, and he felt confident that the Government would receive the support of the Committee in the division about to be taken.

MR. BIGGAR said, he had listened to the discussion that had taken place on this Vote with a considerable amount of interest. He had heard hon. Members pronounce very decided opinions in regard to this £70,000 picture, as being one of very great value. For his part, he was very much disposed to doubt whether the picture was worth such a sum of money; and he would venture to suggest that the Vote should be withdrawn or postponed for the present, and that in the meantime the picture should be brought into the Tea Room for the inspection of hon. Members, and thus give them an opportunity of seeing for themselves what the picture was, and of saying whether or not they would agree with one or other of the two Parties in that House, who said, on the one side, that the picture was one of great value, and, on the other, that it was not at all worth the money. This course would give them the opportunity of seeing the article, and would enable them to judge of its merits for themselves. He might suggest, at the same time, that the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Agnew), who had given so very decided an opinion in favour of the purchase of this highly-priced article, might also put alongside the picture a few other heirlooms, so as to give the House an opportunity of comparing them, and assist hon. Gentlemen in arriving at a satisfactory result. The House could, upon a subsequent day, vote for or against the confirmation of the purchase which had been made, as he understood, in a provisional way by the Government.

MR. WILLIS said, he fully concurred with the right hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Cubitt) in the objection he had raised to this Vote—an objection which was all the stronger if that right hon. Gentleman possessed, as he (Mr. Willis was told he did, a true taste in Art. He would state very shortly his objections to this Vote. In the first place, he objected to deal with a man for the purchase of a picture for the sum of £70,000, when that person had asked £160,000 for it at the beginning of the negotiation. Again, he objected to buy a picture for £70,000 in a case where his own agent had valued it at £110,000, especially when he was told that the £70,000 offered for it was not regarded by the person selling as a fair price. He should say, let those buy it who would give a fair price; and if it were true that there were Foreign Governments who were prepared to purchase the picture for the large price that had been named, let them have it. "No, no!" Hon. Members said "No, no;" but that, at any rate, was his opinion. Having had the advantage of visiting the Louvre, he could say to the French people, they might very well take away a great many of their worthless pictures and acquire this one for their Gallery, where it would aid the Art education of their people, who, perhaps, needed that education quite as much as, if not more than, the English people. He did not think there was any occasion to keep the picture to themselves. We had in the country a sufficient number of Raphael's productions, for the cultivation of taste and the knowledge of the great painter's work. The fact was that, in cases of this kind, the price fixed for a particular work of Art was reckoned according to the known wealth of the competitors, and not in accordance with the actual value of the work, and he ob-

jected to this country being called upon to pay prices like this, that were not estimated in regard to the inherent value of the works offered for sale, but rather in relation to the great wealth of this country. He objected on all these grounds to this Vote.

MR. HEALY said, if it were necessary, he should move that the Committee approve of the purchase. He certainly intended to support the Vote; but, at the same time, he was of opinion that works of Art of such a character ought not to be confined to this country. The taxpayers of the Kingdom generally had to provide the money expended on these purchases; and he thought, therefore, that the people in Ireland, as well as those in Scotland, should occasionally have the opportunity of seeing them. He would give his support to the Vote on the distinct understanding that the opportunity of seeing the pictures was not to be simply confined to London, but that people elsewhere might also be able to see them.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he desired to explain very briefly why it was he intended to oppose this Vote. He thought it was simply a monstrous piece of absurdity to spend a sum of £83,000 in the purchase of two pictures which only a few privileged persons would ever have the pleasure of seeing. He could assure the Committee that there were very few people in Ireland—certainly among those in his own constituency, who, nevertheless, would have to contribute their portion of the cost—who would ever have the advantage of seeing these works of Art. No doubt the people in London would have that advantage; but the great majority of those who would have to pay for them would never have the opportunity of seeing them. But it was not on that ground alone that he wished to oppose the Vote. The hon. Member the Secretary to the Treasury would remember that he (Mr. Redmond) was one of a deputation who waited on him the other day for the purpose of asking the Government to give an additional grant of £40,000 or £50,000 for the completion of a harbour which was now in a very disgraceful condition on the South-East Coast of Wexford. As it was, for the want of a few thousand pounds to complete the harbour a great many lives were constantly being lost, and a large amount of valuable property destroyed. As he had pointed out to the hon. Gentleman on the occasion referred to, there was no part of Ireland, and, perhaps, no part of the United Kingdom, where there existed a greater necessity for the construction of a good harbour of refuge than at the particular portion of the Wexford Coast to which he alluded—namely, Rosslare. ["Question!"] Hon. Members cried "Question;" but he was about to render his remarks *à propos* to the Question. The harbour for which the Government were only asked the miserable contribution of a few thousand pounds would not only greatly benefit the Irish people, but, if completed, as it ought to be, would prove of service to the British mercantile classes generally. Ships were constantly passing to and fro off this part of the Irish Coast. ["Question!"] The question was this—and he was going to put it very plainly—that he thought it a disgraceful procedure on the part of that Committee to vote large sums of money like £83,000 for the purchase of pictures at a time when, as the Committee was well aware, the Government refused to give a few thousand pounds for the completion of a necessary work like the harbour to which he had referred. It appeared to him that the Government were very much in the position of Nero, who played his fiddle while Rome was burning. They were engaged in the very pleasant task of discussing the value of pictures and considering proposals to buy costly paintings at a moment when they were wasting the National treasure and pouring out the best blood of the country in a war against a considerable foe. He believed, however, that the Government were acting wisely, from one point of view, in spending vast sums of money in the purchase of pictures, because, when the news reached the Mahdi that they were thus engaged, what would the Mahdi say? He would probably say—"It is useless for me and my followers to maintain a contest with a nation which is so wealthy that it can, at the same time, equip armies and purchase pictures that are offered at enormous prices." If the English Government wished to impress the Mahdi with a strong sense of the vastness of their wealth, they had better go on buying pictures while they continued their fighting. But he did think

that, while the streets of London were filled with people who were starving and did not know where they were to obtain the means of sustenance, while the trade interests of this country were in a state of great depression, and hundreds and thousands of unemployed workmen and artizans were clamouring outside the Government Offices in the neighbourhood of Parliament Street for work, it was a disgraceful thing for the Government to be proposing the expenditure of vast sums of money on the purchase of pictures. It would be within the recollection of the Committee that, not many days ago, thousands of unemployed workmen, who wanted the means of support for their families, had met in London; and he imagined that when those thousands of men who had clamoured for work outside the Government Offices only a few days ago, and who were denied the employment they asked for, came to hear that, though they were refused the means of living, the Government could purchase costly pictures in which those persons had no interest, they would be very likely to go back to the Government Offices and raise a clamour which he hoped would be louder than before, accompanied by knocks at the door which he trusted would be still stronger and more emphatic. He should oppose this Vote, as he thought there were a hundred and one things in Ireland which needed the attention of the Government far more than the purchase of a couple of pictures at the enormous price of £53,000. As long as people were starving for want of employment, or being shipwrecked for lack of proper harbours in which they could find safety, he would, with all the power given to him, raise his voice against proposals such as this.

MR. CUBITT said, he did not wish to put the Committee, at that late hour, to the trouble of a division, especially as he believed there was a tremendous majority of Members in favour of the Vote. He trusted, however, that the discussion in which they had been engaged would not be without its effect, and that, while the majority of the Committee would remain satisfied with the purchase of the pictures, those who had agreed with him and had supported him in the protest he had offered would be allowed to retain their conviction that that House preferred Art to economy.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 131; Noes 30: Majority 101.—(Div. List, No. 42.)

Vote *agreed to*.

(9.) £30, London University.

(10.) £9,703, Public Education, Scotland.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

MUNICIPAL VOTERS (RELIEF) BILL.

(*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

[BILL 64.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Instruction to the Committee "that they have power to insert a Clause reducing the qualifying period for a municipal vote in Ireland to one year, as in England and Scotland."—(*Mr. Dawson.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that whilst he agreed that the long period of municipal qualification existing in Dublin was unnecessary, he did not think the last words of the Instruction should be adopted.

MR. SEXTON said, that if the objection had any force it could easily be met by arranging that the qualifying period in Ireland should be one year, and the reference to England and Scotland could be omitted.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he had no objection to the Instruction being given in that form; but he would reserve any observations he might have to make on the subject until it came to be dealt with in Committee.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.

Preamble *postponed*.

Clauses 1 and 2 *agreed to*.

Clause 3 (Definitions).

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he thought it would be better to report Progress now, in order to see in what way this clause could be amended.

Motion made, and Question, proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

MOTIONS.

EAST INDIA EXPENSES (MILITARY EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN).

RESOLUTION.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, Her Majesty having directed a Military Expedition of Her Native forces charged upon the Revenues of India to be despatched for service in the Soudan and Nubia, this House consents that the ordinary pay of such troops, as well as the ordinary charges of any vessels belonging to the Government of India that may be employed in the Expedition, which would have been charged upon the revenues of India if such troops or vessels had remained in that country or seas adjacent, shall continue to be so chargeable; Provided, that if it shall become necessary to replace the troops or vessels so withdrawn by other vessels or Native forces, the expense of raising, maintaining, and providing such vessels or forces shall be repaid out of any moneys which may be provided by Parliament for the purposes of the said Expedition."—(*Mr. J. K. Cross.*)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. J. K. Cross.*)

MR. ONSLOW said, he would like to put a question on this subject to the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India; but he would first like to know from the Chair whether, if he asked a question now, he should imperil his right to speak in the debate when it came on?

MR. SPEAKER said, that by putting a question now the hon. Member would not be barred from taking part in the debate.

MR. ONSLOW said, he only wished to know whether the hon. Gentleman could state when it was likely that the Motion could come on for discussion. It was understood that the Civil Service and Army Estimates would come on to-morrow. Was there any chance that the Motion now before the House would be brought on as first Order of the Day to-morrow?

MR. J. K. CROSS said, he hoped the adjourned debate upon the Motion might be taken either as first or second Order of the Day on Monday.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Monday* next.

TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH WIRES.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL moved—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to consider the Law relating to the control over Telephone, Telegraph, and other Wires, and that the Committee do consist of Sir ALEXANDER GORDON, Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG, Mr. TORRENS, Sir HENRY TYLER, Mr. GRAY, Mr. FIRTH, Mr. THOMAS DICKSON, Mr. TOTTENHAM, and Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, with power to send for persons, papers, and records; Three to be the quorum."

MR. GRAY said, he did not object at all to the appointment of the Committee; but he would like to understand what it was that the wording of the Order of Reference exactly covered. The words were—

"To consider the Law relating to the control over Telephone, Telegraph, and other Wires."

And it might be presumed that they referred to the existence of overhead wires. He hoped, however, that they were sufficiently wide to enable the Committee to investigate the whole subject in a complete manner. He would suggest that after the word "over" the words "way leaves" should be inserted.

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, he was very glad that the Government were proposing the appointment of this Committee, for the matter was one which was of very great interest to his constituents.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, it had been especially desired to make the Order of Reference as wide as possible, and the word "overhead" had not been used in order that there might be no risk of excluding underground wires from consideration. He was inclined to think that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gray) need not press any Amendment, for the whole question of telephone and telegraph wires would be considered by the Committee.

MR. GRAY said, he was quite content with that assurance.

Motion *agreed to.*

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (PROVINCIAL SITTINGS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. WHITLEY, Bill to provide for Provincial Sittings of the High Court of Justice in certain populous places, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. WHITLEY, Mr. JACOB BRIGHT, Mr. PHILIP H. MUNTZ, Mr. LEWIS FRY, Lord CLAUD JOHN HAMILTON, Mr. SLAGG, Mr. SAMUEL SMITH, Mr. HOULDSWORTH, Mr. ARMITAGE, and Mr. AGNEW.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 82.]

TRUSTEES RELIEF BILL.

On Motion of Mr. INCE, Bill to amend the Law relating to the liabilities and duties of Trustees, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. INCE and Mr. WHITLEY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 83.]

COPYRIGHT (WORKS OF FINE ART) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HASTINGS, Bill to amend and consolidate the Law of Copyright in Works of Fine Art and in Photographs, and for repressing the commission of fraud in the production and sale of such works, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. HANBURY-TRACY, Sir GABRIEL GOLDNEY, Mr. AGNEW, and Mr. GREGORY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 84.]

House adjourned at One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 6th March, 1885.

MINUTES.—PUBLIC BILLS—*Committee—Report*—Ecclesiastical Commissioners * 17*.
Third Reading—Prevention of Crimes Amendment * 20*, and *passed*.

RAILWAY RATES.

QUESTION.

LORD SUDELEY said, that as he saw the noble Lord (Lord Henniker) in his place he wished to ask him whether he would consent to postpone until Monday week his Motion on the subject of railway rates, which stood upon the Paper in his name for Monday next? The Board of Trade were negotiating with the traders on the one side and with the Railway Companies on the other, and it was hoped that a settlement would be arrived at satisfactory to both parties. If the subject came on for so early a day as Monday, it was feared that the proposed arrangement might be placed in jeopardy. In any case it would be impossible for him, pending those negotiations, to state the views of the Board of Trade, or to take any part in the discussion.

LORD HENNIKER said, that he always thought it a bad plan to postpone a Motion without very strong reasons, as it seemed as if the case to be brought forward was a weak one; and on this occasion he could assure their Lordships that the contrary was the fact. However, if he had been acting quite independently he might have listened to the appeal of the noble Lord. He took on himself the entire responsibility of any action he might take; but he was Chairman of an important Committee on Railway Rates composed of Members of their Lordships' House, Members of the House of Commons, and representatives of Chambers of Commerce, Chambers of Agriculture, and Trading Societies all over the country. Under these circumstances, he could not retire from the position he had taken up without a very strong reason for doing so. He did not believe that anything he would say, or that would be raised by the debate, would prejudice the negotiations going on with the Railway Companies; and he had every reason to believe that a discussion in that House might forward the views, even in the negotiations, of the Committee over which he presided. Of course, the Committee had their views as to various details; but that was not the time to state those views. Suffice it to say that one main point was, that the very great changes in railway legislation proposed by certain Bills in that House and in the other House of Parliament should not be made in such measures, but in a Bill brought in by the Government. If the noble Lord would say that the negotiations going on were based strictly on this principle well and good—he would put off his Motion for a week; but if not, he must proceed with it, for he could not tell what direction the negotiations might take, and he might not only prejudice his case by postponement, but be helping those who took a different view from the Committee over which he had the honour to preside.

LORD SUDELEY said, he was afraid he could not give the information required as to the nature of the negotiations; and he presumed, therefore, that the noble Lord would go on with his Motion.

ENGLAND AND GERMANY—SPEECH OF PRINCE BISMARCK.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, with the permission of the House, I wish to make a very short statement. Your Lordships have doubtless read in the ordinary channels of information a report of the speech made by Prince Bismarck a few days ago on the subject of the relations between Germany and this country. I feel, and I think your Lordships will feel, that it would be unbecoming, either as respects this House or the German Chancellor, of me to make anything like a lengthened reply here to what was stated in the Reichstag by Prince Bismarck; and for that reason there are several points raised by him—as to the numbers of our communications in writing, of despatches being published before delivery, and of despatches published which ought not to have been published at all—which I do not intend to touch. On these points I hope to be able to make such a statement in a regular way to Prince Bismarck that will show him that a very different colour can be given to our proceedings. But I do not think I need be quite so reticent with regard to what I stated in this House. Your Lordships will probably remember that I spoke in debate under the pressure of a severe Parliamentary attack; and what I said, to my sincere regret, has given annoyance to Prince Bismarck—I think from some misconception of the bearing of it. You will remember that in the course of his speech the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon), who is not now present, made a fair Parliamentary attack upon us by saying—

"It is shown in your own Papers that your Egyptian policy is so bad that a great foreign statesman condemns it."

I met this by the retort that I had no reason to complain of Prince Bismarck's disapproval, because we had not followed the advice—I ought, perhaps, to have said opinions—which he had given to the last and present Government to take Egypt—advice which must be considered as very friendly to this country. I added that I presumed that the noble Duke did not expect us to abandon all liberty of action in foreign and Colonial policy—a thrust which, however slight, I aimed at the noble Duke, and not in the least against Prince Bismarck. Prince Bismarck, however, to my great regret, construed this as having a meaning which I can positively assert I did not attach to it. He also complained of my having incorrectly described advice, or rather opinions, which, even if true, I had no right to mention, as they had been of a most confidential character. Now, as to the words "take Egypt." I might probably have used a better phrase if I had spoken from written notes, although the words certainly apply either to an annexation or a Protectorate, or even to an occupation for the future. With regard to a breach of confidence, I should deeply regret any such act, which would be much more painful and injurious to myself than to anyone else. The accusation, of course, does not apply to what happened under the late Government, when I had no access to official sources, though receiving, together with other Leaders of the Opposition, much important information. It was assumed that what I had said as to advice given, or, more properly speaking, opinions expressed, was founded on very confidential and very friendly communications which passed in 1882, and of which the Prince gave a detailed explanation the other day. But I did not mean to refer to those private and very friendly communications which Prince Bismarck described to the Reichstag. I referred to subsequent declarations, not of a confidential character, which seemed to me to express that two years ago, whatever may be the opinion now, it was the wish and hope of the German Government that England should take upon herself to represent the interests of Europe in Egypt for the future. And I must add that I do not wish to imply that such a hope was expressed in a manner inconsistent with existing Treaties. My object in making this statement is not to defend myself. It is for the purpose of correcting misapprehensions which are inevitable when important utterances on foreign affairs are conveyed by telegraphic messages, frequently incorrect, to all the capitals of Europe. I can conceive nothing more wanting in self-respect, or in respect for the great Minister of a foreign and friendly State, than that I should have spontaneously initiated in this place any attack upon such a person as the leading

Minister in Germany. Your Lordships will have noted with satisfaction the concluding words of Prince Bismarck on the future relations of the two nations—the more impressive as they were spoken at a moment of some annoyance. There seems to be a suspicion in Germany that we are not fully cognizant of the present position of that great nation. I believe, on the contrary, that there is no country in which not only politicians but all classes more fully and cheerfully appreciate the immensely important position in Europe that Germany occupies since her own union. I believe it to be in the interest of Europe that German relations should be good with this country, and that they should not be less so with France and her other neighbours. I am sure that it is more than ever in the interest of Germany and ourselves that our relations should be good at a time when we are about to meet in almost every part of the world. While both will maintain their rights, I cannot doubt that we ought to advance in a great and common work of commerce and civilization in a spirit of cordial co-operation. Your Lordships will not doubt that all my efforts will be exerted in favour of the conciliatory policy which has been sketched out by the German Chancellor.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY—THE MINISTERIAL PROGRAMME.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked Her Majesty's Government, What progress has been made towards carrying out the additions to the Navy which were announced by the First Lord of the Admiralty last autumn, and whether the Admiralty still intend to adhere to the terms of that announcement, or to proceed at once to still further increase the strength of the Naval Forces? The noble Lord complained that no progress had been made in the interval in the Dockyards. If the Admiralty Constructor was unable to execute the work required, it could easily be done in private yards. Had the Government at once given an order, 50 torpedo boats of the new type could have been completed in nine months. Three months had now gone, and nothing whatever had been done. He ventured to think that the march of political events, and the clouds even now looming in the East, rendered it absolutely necessary that the whole of the Government programme should be immediately carried out. Comparing our Navy with that of other countries, it appeared that we had in the Mediterranean six first class iron-clads, and a large number of well-armed smaller vessels. France had also a large Naval Force there, and the Fleets of the Italians and other nations were powerful. Whether or not our Fleet taken altogether was superior to that of France was a debateable matter; but, at all events, it was on such an equality as it had never been the practice of this country to permit. On the East Indian and China Stations we had only two iron-clad ships, while the French had five partially-armed frigates and nine gun-boats, besides four iron-clads and a number of small vessels. It was most inconsistent with the practice of this country and the national safety to leave our vast Possessions and enormous trade in the East so totally unprotected, as it would be with such an inadequate Naval Force, in the event of war suddenly breaking out. Referring to the proposed increase in the Navy, the noble Lord expressed the opinion that the provision of torpedo boats was utterly inadequate. With a much greater coast line than other European countries, we had a far less proportion of torpedo boats. A large number of these vessels should be ordered at once. He would ask what provision we had for docking vessels of the first class on foreign stations? There were docks in the hands of private firms in Bombay, and a small dock at Trincomalee; but really the only dock we had in that part of the world was at Hong Kong, and in the present state of intercourse between France and China considerable difficulties might arise at that port, which would prevent our making use of it. Such a state of things ought to be thoroughly considered by the noble Earl. It was true that there were some docks in the Colonies; but they did not belong to this country, and we should not be able to claim the entire use of them at any time. The noble Earl at the head of the Admiralty had made no addition *personnel* of the Navy. In 1814 this country could muster 140,000 sailors; but at the present time, with all our Reserves, we could not muster more than 80,000, many of whom were untrained, whereas France had an enor-

mous Reserve Force in every port, and, besides her Navy, had a Reserve of 70,000 trained men. The men were to be had in this country, and we ought to be able to lay our hands upon a much larger proportion of men than were attached to Her Majesty's ships at present. Then there was the question of the Intelligence Department. Last year, replying to the noble Earl (the Earl of Camperdown), the noble Earl had told them that the Intelligence Department of the Navy were doing good work. He hoped that they had considered the work which the Russians were doing at Vladivostock, where they were making a Naval Station of the first class. With reference to the Colonies, he thought it was a great pity that at the present time, when the Colonies were showing their patriotism, nothing was being done by the Admiralty to encourage them in their gallant efforts to protect their shores. They were left to themselves, while this great Empire was so much indebted to them for their gallant conduct. With regard to our ships themselves, he contended that some of the vessels given forth as fighting ships could not possibly be considered safe to fight in, although he would not now go into the question of the danger or safety of ships with unarmoured ends. In conclusion, he begged to ask the noble Earl the Questions of which he had given Notice.

THE EARL OF CLANWILLIAM asked Her Majesty's Government, What guns above 43 tons weight had been ordered by the Admiralty, and which of them had not been supplied, with the cause for any delay? The noble Earl said that nothing had been done by the Government to redeem the promise made by the First Lord of the Admiralty last December. There was only a small increase shown in the totals for shipbuilding. Guns which had been ordered in 1879 were not even now all furnished. The *Benbow*, with two 110-ton guns, the *Rodney*, *Howe*, *Camperdown*, and *Anson*, with four 63-ton guns each, the *Edinburgh*, with four, and the *Hero*, with two 43-ton guns, and the *Impérieuse* and *Warspite* would all be kept waiting for their guns. The Returns that had been placed before the House were misleading. In those Returns the *Colossus* was stated to have been finished, whereas the fact was she had no guns; they were not finished. What was the use of ironclads without guns? The arrangements for furnishing guns to the Navy were solely due to the want of the necessary plant at Woolwich for making guns. If they had the necessary plant they would be independent of the private trade. He did not object to private firms getting orders for guns; but he thought that we ought to be able to make our own guns if the private trade could not make them. The whole Service was disgusted with the state of affairs. He only spoke as a Naval Officer, and felt sure he was expressing the feelings of all his brother officers, who knew how behindhand they were, and that in case of war they ought to be twice as strong as at present.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, that he would answer the Questions put to him by the noble Viscount (Viscount Sidmouth) as well as he could, although they had extended much beyond the scope of the Notice given, and travelled over almost every subject connected with the Navy. However, he would take the Questions as they came. In the first place, the noble Viscount asked what progress had been made in carrying out the additions to the Navy which were announced last autumn. Not a moment had been lost in carrying out the programme that was announced in December last. Some persons seemed to think that ships could be built almost as quickly as a speech could be made; but that was, of course, out of the question. In the first place, the decision had to be come to as to the type of ship to be built. He had explained in December that the Board of Admiralty had considered, with the greatest possible care, the different type of ships to be laid down. Having arrived at their conclusions, orders were given, before the statements were made on the 2nd of December in both Houses of Parliament, to prepare the detailed designs for the different classes of vessels. The designs were completed in the following order:—For the new *Scouts* on December 31; for the belted cruisers on February 27; and for the iron-clads on February 28. He could assure their Lordships that the time taken for preparing the drawings and specifications of those ships, so far from being long, had been exceptionally short; and it

was to the very great credit of the Constructors' Department of the Admiralty that so short a time had been taken in preparing the specifications and elaborate drawings that were necessary for the contracts for those ships. The Committee that was presided over by Lord Ravensworth went out of its way to make a representation to the effect that the specifications and drawings for ships which the Admiralty put out to contract should be much more complete and elaborate than was formerly the case; and, accordingly, the designs to which he was now referring had been prepared in the most complete and elaborate manner, and there had been no waste of time at all in regard to them. Unless the designs and drawings were most carefully prepared when the contracts for the ships were taken, there would be constant applications for explanations and otherwise, so that the construction of the ships was delayed. Therefore, he had no hesitation in saying that anyone who had any practical knowledge of shipbuilding would tell them that the Constructors' Department deserved great credit for the rapidity with which they had prepared the designs and specifications of the different classes of ships. Extra draftsmen had been employed, and every possible pains had been taken that not a moment should be lost. The Admiralty, also, had lost no time in approving of the invitation of tenders as soon as the drawings were made. They approved of the invitation of tenders for the new *Scouts* on the 31st of December, and the tenders were invited on the 5th of January, to be delivered by the 24th of February. This allowed the firms making the tenders a longer time than usual, and was done in consequence of the recommendation of the Committee to which he had before alluded, to the effect that plenty of time should be given to the shipbuilders to inspect the designs before they prepared their tenders, with the object of inviting them to make any suggestion that occurred to them in respect to the designs before the contract was actually made. The tenders for the *Scouts* were received on February 24, and they were accepted on February 27. The *Scouts* were to be built in 18 months. The tenders had not yet been received for the iron-clads and the belted cruisers. The designs for the belted cruisers were completed on the 27th of February, and those for the iron-clads on the 28th of February. The tenders for the belted cruisers and iron-clads were invited some time before the drawings were absolutely complete, and they were due on April 16 and 17. Nothing, then, could be more unjust than to blame the Constructors' Department of the Admiralty for any delay whatever. He must say he thought that before making the statement he had made, that nothing had been done by the Admiralty to carry out the programme explained last December, the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Clanwilliam) might have taken the pains to look into the Navy Estimates and see whether his statements were accurate. The noble Earl, who had himself been a Lord of the Admiralty, said he found no proof in the Estimates of the programme that was announced in December being carried out. Now, there was no less a sum than £800,000 taken in the Estimates for this year for the carrying out of that programme. He had himself mentioned in December that a sum of £800,000 would be spent this year in building ships by contract. The whole of that appeared in the Shipbuilding Estimate for this year; and if the noble Earl had taken the pains to look he would have seen it there. He regretted that the noble Earl should, considering his position, have given an impression that was absolutely without foundation in fact. The noble Viscount (Viscount Sidmouth) had asked him whether the Admiralty still intended to adhere to the terms of the announcement he had made last autumn, or to proceed at once still further to increase the strength of the Naval Forces. Now, the announcement he made in December last referred to a particular point; and to one only—namely, that of shipbuilding. The whole of the discussion was confined to that particular point, and he was far from saying then that there were no other calls upon the Admiralty—no other calls for the expenditure of money on the Navy, and that the Naval Estimates should be confined strictly to the sums that had been spent during the last three or four years, or that no other increase should be made in the Naval Estimates than an increase in shipbuilding. He had just said that in the Naval Estimates for this year there was an increase of

£800,000 for building ships by contract and carrying out the programme which he announced to their Lordships in December, and which he thought at the time was received with general approval. Besides that, the Naval Estimates this year showed a further increase of £700,000 over the Naval Estimates of last year, in addition to the £800,000, making, on the whole, comparing the Naval Estimates of the year to come with those of last year, omitting Supplemental Estimates from the comparison, an increase of about £1,500,000. The noble Viscount did not seem to be satisfied. He was sorry for that. All he could say was that the Board of Admiralty had carefully considered the whole case to the best of their ability, and they came to the conclusion that it would be desirable to make a very considerable increase in the provision for the Navy. The noble Lord had referred to the question of the *personnel* of the Navy. The late Board of Admiralty had, he thought, unwisely reduced the number of boys admitted into the Service. The effect of that had not been altogether satisfactory; and, therefore, the present Board had been obliged to increase the number to remedy the defects of the previous injudicious reduction. That was one reason why they had this year to make an increase of the *personnel*. Besides that they had thought it right to increase the number of Marines in consequence of some of that gallant force being employed in the operations in Egypt. There would be an increase of 1,000 seamen and Marines besides boys to keep up the proper numbers. In addition to the shipbuilding by contract, the Admiralty were pushing on with the ships that were building in the Dockyards, and they hoped in the course of the year to complete four iron-clad ships. They thought—and everybody who had attended to the matter thought so, too—that it was very desirable not to delay the completion of the iron-clads. That had been the policy of the Board of Admiralty. The noble Viscount had alluded the other night to a Return moved for last year, and now in the hands of their Lordships. The noble Viscount would see from the Return that the policy of the Board of Admiralty had been to increase considerably year by year the expenditure for the construction of ships. On page 12 of that Return it would be seen that the increase had been from £1,500,000 in 1880-1, to £2,000,000 in 1883-4, and that increase had been sustained during the coming year. It had been thought right and necessary to increase the number of iron-clad ships, and therefore the Admiralty had increased the number very considerably. This had been done for the reasons which were explained last year, and which he need not repeat now. Besides that increase, however, it was considered desirable that at the present time, and in the existing circumstances of the country, a further increase should be made in the shipbuilding of the Navy, so that there should be a still greater superiority in the Navy of this country than at present existed. He entirely dissented from the view of the noble Viscount in reference to the position of the British Navy. The Board of Admiralty held that our Navy was largely superior in power to the Navy of France, or that of any other Power, as it ought to be, and as it must be, in the hands of any Government responsible for the safety of the country. There was no justification, therefore, for such statements as those which had been made in their Lordships' House or elsewhere. This was the opinion of the responsible advisers of the Government, and it was the opinion which he maintained, and which he believed would be maintained by anyone who impartially and quietly investigated the matter. The noble Viscount compared the Fleets in different parts of the world. He (the Earl of Northbrook) held that the strength of the Navy of a country was not to be weighed by a comparison between the number of ships nations might have in different parts of the world at the same time. At the present time the French had a war with China. Would the noble Viscount say that in consequence of that war it would have been right that the English Admiralty should have raised the strength of the China Squadron to the same strength as that of the French?

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: Certainly.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, he believed no one would seriously advocate such an opinion, for the reason that for a nation to immediately raise its Forces because another Power happened to be at war to the same strength as that other Power would be the most certain

way to create jealousy, and in all probability to lead to hostilities. Therefore the Board of Admiralty did not think it necessary, in consequence of the French war in China, to raise the strength of the China Squadron to the same strength as that of the French. The noble Viscount gave his view of the merits of the different ships the Admiralty had laid down. All he could say was that, with great respect to the noble Viscount and his experience at sea, he held that the responsible advisers of the Admiralty, and the Naval Members of the Board of Admiralty, were better judges on the whole, and were more likely to secure the confidence of their Lordships and the country, than the simple *dictum* of the noble Viscount. He could not himself pretend to judge of the technical merits of ships; but he had, as a civilian, the best advisers that this or any other country could possess in such a matter. He did not believe that there had been any abler men engaged in the construction of ships of war than Mr. Barnaby, the Chief Constructor of the Navy, and his staff. An instance was afforded the other day of the reputation of that Department of the Admiralty. Sir William Armstrong and Co. wished to add to their other business that of shipbuilding. Where did they go in order to obtain a head for their shipbuilding department? They went to the Admiralty and engaged Mr. White, of Mr. Barnaby's Department, as head of their shipbuilding department. At the present moment the Board of Admiralty had Naval Constructors second to none in the service of any other nation. The designs of the ships referred to had been produced by those officers, and they had been brought to him on the responsibility of the Controller of the Navy, Rear Admiral Brandreth, an officer who possessed the confidence of the Navy, and had been in charge of one of the most important Dockyards. They had met with the approval of the Naval Members of the Board of Admiralty, and he put authority against authority on this matter He did not himself profess to have any technical acquaintance with the construction of ships. He relied entirely on authority, and he said that the authority the Admiralty had as to the merits of the different classes of ships they had ordered was, to his mind, sufficient to justify the confidence of the country. That was his answer to the noble Viscount's criticism as to the ships being of a worthless character. In regard to the noble Viscount's remarks on the number of torpedo boats, he desired to point out that the noble Viscount had misunderstood some observations made by him last December on the value of torpedo attack. In placing before their Lordships certain views on this point, he said that the value of torpedo attack was likely to increase. In saying that, however, he did not mean alone, or even principally, attack by torpedo boats; but that instead of placing so much confidence in large iron-clad ships, it might be preferable to see ships of a smaller class—ships of the ram class firing torpedoes—in substitution of the very large and expensive ships which were now built. He entirely agreed, however, with the opinions expressed by the French Minister of Marine that it would be premature at present to give up building iron-clads, because so long as they were built by other nations, so long as the protection given by the compound plates was sufficient to keep out the fire of the best guns now made, those large ships must probably constitute the most important element in the Fleets of the world. On that occasion he also stated that he quite understood nations of very inferior naval power to Britain—Russia and Germany, for example—spending large sums of money in buying and building a great many torpedo boats, for the reason that torpedo boats were mainly a defensive weapon. That was the reason why he explained to their Lordships that the Board of Admiralty thought it desirable to build a good many ships of the *Scout* class—which were sea-going vessels—to carry torpedoes, and also the torpedo rams. He explained, on that occasion, that this was the reason why the Board did not attach so much importance to the torpedo boats as the noble Viscount appeared to do, for the torpedo boats could not be considered as sea-keeping vessels, and would not be able to accompany fleets to sea for long voyages. As part of the extra provision for 30 torpedo boats, the Government had ordered 10 already. They desired, moreover, to get more firms to undertake their manufacture than was at present the case. At present there were but two or three

firms accustomed to build torpedo boats; and it would be a great advantage to the Admiralty and the country if they could induce other firms to take up the building of torpedo boats. Besides the 10 boats referred to, the Government had, therefore, invited other firms to build five at their own risk, so that they might become accustomed to the construction of this class of boat. The noble Viscount also made observations in regard to machine guns. The reason why the Admiralty had deferred ordering shell guns of this kind was that by a little delay they expected to get a much better pattern of gun. This, he was glad to say, they had succeeded in doing; and in the Army Estimates for the coming year provision would be made for a considerable number of guns of the description to which the noble Viscount alluded. The Admiralty already had a number of machine guns, but not machine guns that fired shell. The noble Earl (the Earl of Clanwilliam) had asked a question as to the supply of large guns for the ships now building. Eight 63-ton guns had already been ordered, four for the *Rodney* and four for the *Howe*, to be delivered in June, 1886, and 63-ton ton guns for the *Camperdown* and *Anson* would be ordered in the autumn. Three 110-ton guns had been ordered for the *Benbow*, and would be delivered in the course of the present year. There was no doubt that there had been a most regrettable difficulty in supplying breech-loading guns for the Navy. When Mr. Smith left the Admiralty in 1880 he expressed his regret on this point. It was unnecessary to discuss whose fault this was. Certainly, we had been behind other nations in this respect; but we were now rapidly remedying this defect. Lastly, the noble Viscount had asserted that the Board of Admiralty were hostile to the efforts of the Australian Colonies to increase their Navy. That was quite an error.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: I only said that the Government did not encourage the Colonies.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, if the noble Viscount, or anyone else, would point out how the Admiralty could assist the Australian Colonies in their patriotic efforts to strengthen their Navies, Her Majesty's Government would be only too happy to co-operate. The Admiralty had assisted them already, both in the purchase of ships and by lending officers; and he could assure their Lordships that no effort should be wanting on his part to assist these Colonies in their most praiseworthy efforts. For reasons that he explained last December, Her Majesty's Government had determined to make certain additions to the Navy, and measures had been taken for the purpose of carrying out the scheme then submitted to Parliament. He could assure their Lordships that the Board of Admiralty were quite as anxious as the noble Viscount could possibly be to maintain the superiority of the British Navy.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON remarked that, in reference to the speech which had just been delivered by the noble Earl opposite, he desired to say that, assuming the national necessity for a greater increase in the rate of shipbuilding for the Navy than was represented by the sum of £800,000 which the noble Earl opposite had mentioned, he saw no reason why that sum should not be increased to £1,600,000. With regard to the question of delay, he was bound to say that from the Papers which had been laid on the Table he had come to the conclusion that no steps whatever had been taken by the Admiralty with a view of giving effect to the proposals of last autumn. A Return had been laid on the Table within the last few days which was so instructive that he wished to call attention to it. It was a Return of the ships that had been laid down during the last five years; and he found from that Return that there were no less than 61 ships, large and small, comprised in it, and of those no less than 30 remained uncompleted. This did seem a very serious condition of things. Among the latter, leaving out of consideration the smaller vessels, were the *Collingwood* (9,150 tons), the *Arethusa* (3,750 tons), and the *Phaeton* (3,750 tons), which were laid in 1880-1; the *Rodney* (9,700 tons), the *Warspite* (7,390 tons), the *Impérieuse* (7,390 tons), the *Amphion* (3,750 tons), the *Calliope* (2,770 tons), and the *Calypso* (2,770 tons), which were laid down in 1881-2; and the *Benbow* (10,000 tons), the *Camperdown* (10,000 tons), and the *Howe* (9,700 tons), which were laid down in 1882-3. Of those vessels which had been laid down during those five years, it was uncertain when the *Camperdown*, the *Howe*,

the *Anson*, of 10,000 tons, and the *Hero*, of 6,000 tons, would be completed. This uncertainty was fraught with great danger in comparing our Navy with that of foreign countries. In the same Return the speed of the different ships was given. He found that, with regard to the 61 ships he had referred to, of those having an estimated speed of 17 knots none were completed; of those having an estimated speed of 16 knots the *Leander* alone was completed; of those having an estimated speed of 15 knots or of 14 knots none were completed; while of those having an estimated speed of 13 knots four partially protected sloops were completed, and two others were nearly ready. On this point, therefore, this Return disclosed a very unsatisfactory state of things. With regard to torpedo boats or ships no mention was made in the Return; but the *Scout*, of 1,130 tons, would be completed in June of this year, and the *Fearless*, of the same tonnage, would be completed in February next; while two gun and torpedo ships, of 785 tons, were to be completed at a period which was uncertain. What was the Admiralty programme for 1885-6? There would be commenced in the Dockyards two armour-clads, the tonnage and type of which had not yet been decided upon; while it was intended that there should be built by contract, although they had not yet been ordered, two armour-clads, five belted cruisers, and six new *Scouts*. There was an absolute blank in the programme with regard to the 10 first-class torpedo boats which it was intended should be built. With reference to what the noble Earl opposite had stated as to the strength of the English Navy, he had understood it to be generally admitted in all recent discussions on the subject in the other House of Parliament that the English Navy was not in the condition in which it ought to be—namely, equal in force to that of France joined to the Navy of any other Foreign Power. Our expenditure on torpedoes was entirely inadequate. It was a remarkable fact that, while we were not spending this year £[illegible] upon torpedo boats, Germany was devoting £[illegible] to that arm of the Service alone. As regards guns, he did not know that anything had been done which altered the position in the autumn. The guns made were good enough, provided only they had plant enough and were not dependent on private resources. He regretted that he had not heard anything said in reference to our coaling stations. He had before urged their paramount importance to this country; and it was impossible for any First Lord of the Admiralty to dispute how essential they were to our commerce and Navy—they could not, in short, keep the Navy afloat, or give adequate protection to our commerce, if the coaling stations were not placed in a more satisfactory condition. He would have been glad to hear that active steps were being taken to make our coaling stations more secure against attacks; but he feared that nothing had been done, particularly to the most important station of all—he referred to the Cape of Good Hope. The real truth was that that which lay at the root of all these and other matters was the great fear—the terror—which haunted all Governments—the spending of money. He had heard the most absurd argument used—"Tell us what the aggregate expenditure is, and if that expenditure exceeds ours you are, *pro tanto*, wrong." There could be nothing more absurd than that. With a much larger population, and with an enormously increased trade, they were content to spend at a much lower rate for their assurance, and were, in his view, living in a fool's paradise. His own belief was that the solution of their difficulty lay in the direction of a capital expenditure, whether by loans or terminable annuities. He doubted, failing that, whether there was any other course which would satisfy the mind of the country, and give them that assurance which they desired and to which they were entitled. It had been suggested that a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into the adequacy of their naval strength and general means. He had no very great faith in Commissions, and for the reason that, if they really examined properly, they consumed a great deal of valuable time and personal labour, and at the end of the inquiry the Reports were pigeon-holed and became comparatively valueless. He would rather see a Joint Committee of both Houses. The recommendations of such a Committee would be more difficult to set aside than any other species of recommendations. Lastly, he

wished the Board of Admiralty would ask for what they wanted, and not for what they thought they could get. He feared it was that system of paring and pruning and cutting down the Estimates in order to meet the supposed temper of the House of Commons which was largely responsible for the mischief. He had more than once urged the creation of a Departmental Body, which would combine effectively the naval, military, and Colonial elements of this question. This would save an enormous interchange of correspondence which now arose, which wasted such a large amount of time, and which, ultimately, would lead to a miscarriage. The present was one of those serious moments when the question could be best pressed upon the attention of the Government. They had their difficulties with France; they had the difficulty as to their Indian Frontier, where a single chance collision of outposts might involve them in hostilities; and they had the extreme tension in their relations with Germany. It was not only in the South Pacific, and in distant parts of our Dominions, that we had cause for anxiety. Blue Books before the House, as well as the singular communication they had that evening had from the Foreign Minister, made it plain how painfully strained our relations with foreign countries were. If anything more were wanted to confirm that view, it would be the fact that Her Majesty's Government had thought fit to call upon the Reserves. This one point should be kept in mind—that any military difficulty in which we might be involved meant the necessity for a great Navy. We should not now be able to act with our Navy as we did during the Crimean War. That state of things was at an end, and any military difficulties in which this country might now be involved unquestionably meant naval difficulties of a very large and complicated nature. He should like to see the naval arrangements of the country carried out in such a manner as to show foreign nations that we were determined to be fully prepared for any emergency; and it should be remembered that, when the arrangements to be adopted had once been decided, delay in carrying them out meant not only additional danger, but, in the long run, great additional expense.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in reply, said, he did not agree with the statements of the First Lord of the Admiralty (the Earl of Northbrook); and he should be prepared to prove, at any time, that the Navy of France was nearly on a par with that of this country, both as regarded guns and armour-plated ships; and he complained that the noble Earl would not face the difficulty.

THE EARL OF CLANWILLIAM explained that he had referred to the very small increase in the Estimates—only about £800,000 shown in the totals at the end—considering all that was required to be done by the Board of Admiralty.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK said, that it would not be in accordance with the practice of the House that he should make a second speech. He wished only to explain that provision was taken in the Army Estimates of this year in respect to the defences of coaling stations, and that at two of those stations the work was actually being carried on.

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 6th March, 1885.

MINUTES.]—NEW WRIT ISSUED—*For* Glasgow, *v.* George Anderson, esquire, Manor of Northstead.

SELECT COMMITTEE—Telephone and Telegraph Wires, Sir Henry Tyler *discharged;* Mr. Coleridge Kennard *added.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [March 6] *reported.*

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Metropolitan Board of Works.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Select Committee* — Shannon Navigation * [54], *nominated.*

Committee—Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) (*re-comm.*) [49]—R.P. [*First Night*].

Considered as amended — Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) [19-85].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg.*)

MR. RITCHIE rose to move—

"That this House regrets that the Bill contains no provision to confer powers on the Metropolitan Board of Works to carry out the recommendation of the Select Committee on the Metropolitan Board of Works (Thames Crossings) Bill, 1884, to the effect that two crossings being immediately required a subway at or near Shadwell should be constructed by the Metropolitan Board of Works."

The hon. Member said, he should have preferred that his hon. and gallant Friend should have followed the usual practice of making a statement in moving the second reading of the Bill; but he was not surprised that, under the circumstances, his hon. and gallant Friend had not adopted the usual course. What he Mr. Ritchie, proposed to ask the House to do was not so much to object to the Bill, or anything it contained, as rather to express regret for what it did not contain. As far as the propositions in the Bill were concerned, he had not a word to say against them. The Motion which he had placed on the Paper expressed regret that the Bill included no provision or power within it to enable the Metropolitan Board of Works to carry out what was admitted, on all hands, to be a very necessary communication between the two sides of the River Thames, and which had been strongly recommended by a Parliamentary Select Committee which sat only last Session. It would be unnecessary for him to take up the time of the House by any lengthened remarks as to the absolute necessity and great urgency of establishing permanent communication between the two sides of the River below London Bridge. It was unnecessary to go over ground which had so often been gone over before, or to show that a large mass of the labouring and industrial population of London, living upon an area which extended for three or four miles East of London Bridge, were without any means whatever of crossing from one side of the River to the other. The question had been the subject of much discussion before; and in every quarter of the House it was admitted that the East End of London was unfairly handicapped in consequence of this want of communication. As long ago as 1882 the engineer of the Metropolitan Board of Works recommended that three permanent crossings should be made—one by means of a High Level Bridge at or near the Tower, a second by a subway at Shadwell, and a third by means of a subway or tunnel at Blackwall. Not only did the engineer of the Board recommend that the requirements of the East End of London should thus be met, but he also submitted full plans of the means by which he proposed to provide the accommodation which he considered necessary, after a careful investigation had been made by him into the whole subject. The plans and estimates submitted by Sir Joseph Bazalgette were for the construction of a High Level Bridge at Tower Hill, and subways at Shadwell and Blackwall. It would not be correct to say that the Metropolitan Board of Works ever adopted the Report of their engineer. But his hon. and gallant Friend would not consider that he (Mr. Ritchie) went too far when he said that the proposal of the engineer of the Board was, to say the least of it, favourably regarded by the Metropolitan Board; and, indeed, more than once, they gave as a reason why the Board did not proceed to carry out the plans suggested by their own engineer that they did not think they had sufficient funds at their disposal to permit them to entertain so large and important a scheme. They hinted, however, that if they could induce the Government to renew the Coal and Wine Duties for another period of years they might probably then be in a position to carry out the suggestions of their engineer. But it soon became known that Her Majesty's Government did not propose to renew the Coal and Wine Duties, so that any idea of carrying out this important system of crossings by that means was given up by the Metropolitan Board of Works. They had received propositions without number from the East End of London asking them, if they did not see their way to the carrying out of the entire scheme of their own engineer, but found themselves only able to proceed with one part of it, that the crossing decided upon should be in a more central position than those proposed by Sir Joseph Bazalgette. It was pointed out that if only one crossing was to be made, that ought to be one that would be most convenient for the three miles of district at present without accommodation. The utmost importance was attached, in the interests of the population, to the central position of the subway, if the full scheme of Sir

Joseph Bazalgette were not to be carried out. But, notwithstanding the representations made to the Metropolitan Board of Works by deputations and otherwise, the Board declined to consent to the wishes of the inhabitants, and put them entirely on one side. All the public Bodies in the East End of London, with one exception, were absolutely unanimous in deciding that the subway at Shadwell was that which ought to be constructed. But, notwithstanding that fact, the Metropolitan Board of Works, although they came to a resolution that one scheme only should be proceeded with, resolved that it should not be a tunnel at Shadwell—that, in point of fact, it should not be any one of the three schemes suggested by their own engineer, but that it should be a tunnel or subway from Wapping to Bermondsey known as the Nightingale Lane Tunnel. That scheme was unanimously opposed by the East End of London, quite as unanimously as the Shadwell scheme was recommended by the Local Authorities. It was felt that, as the question was one which directly affected the interests of a large body of the inhabitants of the Metropolis, it ought not to be dealt with by an ordinary Private Bill Committee, but by a Hybrid Committee, where all persons who were interested might be heard and evidence fully taken. A proposal to that effect was made by himself (Mr. Ritchie) and brought forward in the House, but objected to by his hon. and gallant Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg). The House, however, thought that it was a reasonable proposal and consented to it, and the hon. Baronet the Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian) was appointed Chairman of the Committee. After a long, patient, and very careful inquiry, this Hybrid Committee, having heard all the evidence laid before them on the subject, unanimously came to the conclusion that the public Bodies and deputations which had waited on the Metropolitan Board of Works, and recommended them to proceed, not with the Nightingale Lane scheme, but with the Shadwell scheme, were right. They, therefore, threw out the Bill of the Board of Works. But they felt that the evidence they had received was of so important a character, and that the whole question was of such vital interest to the Metropolis, that they asked leave of the House to make a special Report, in addition to the ordinary Report it was customary to make as to the merits of a Private Bill. The Committee, in this special Report, stated that there were two objects to be served—one was the relief of the congested traffic of London Bridge and the district North and North-East of the Tower and Bermondsey, while a second object was to meet the requirements of Mile End, Shadwell, Bethnal Green, Limehouse, Poplar, Bow, Bromley, and Hackney, also the largely increasing traffic between the factories of the Silver Town Estate and West India Docks, Millwall, and Victoria Docks on the North, and Bermondsey, Rotherhithe, the Surrey Commercial Docks, and Deptford on the South. This Report applied to a stretch of four miles East of London Bridge, containing 1,500,000 people. To secure these objects the Committee recommended—

"That two crossings are immediately required, and should be sanctioned by Parliament. One a Low Level Bridge at Little Tower Hill; the other a subway at or near Shadwell, which would be central, and would best meet the wants and wishes of the inhabitants East of London Bridge."

The Committee concluded their Report as follows:—

"Your Committee cannot avoid expressing a hope that the Corporation of the City of London may be induced to undertake this great and useful work (a Bridge) contemporaneously with the construction of a subway at Shadwell by the Metropolitan Board of Works."

It would thus be seen that the Committee entirely agreed with the Local Bodies and deputations which had waited on the Metropolitan Board of Works, and that they entirely concurred with the Metropolitan Board's own engineer, who had two years before recommended the very work which the Select Committee of the House of Commons, after hearing evidence, also felt themselves bound to recommend. It was a somewhat remarkable fact that the Report of the Select Committee met with more approval than the Report of almost any Select Committee for years. It was not only approved by the Local Bodies in the East End of London and by the Corporation of the City of London, but by the whole of the Press of the Metropolis. It was felt that the Report was a fair

one, and that it dealt adequately with the necessities of the case. In regard to the action of the City of London, it must not be forgotten that the Bridge upon which the City was about to commence operations was not within the area of the City at all, but outside of it; and he was bound to give the highest praise to the Corporation of the City when he felt that they were not bound to take the construction of a Bridge into consideration at all. They followed a different course, and at once referred the Report of the Select Committee to a Committee specially appointed to inquire into all the circumstances, and to suggest what action was, in their opinion, necessary to enable the Corporation to carry out the recommendations of the Select Committee. The Committee sat without delay, and, after full inquiry, reported in favour of the recommendations of the Select Committee, and it was only yesterday that the House read a second time a Bill promoted by the Corporation of the City of London for carrying out the first of the proposals originally suggested by Sir Joseph Bazalgette—namely, the construction of a Bridge near Tower Hill, which was not to cost the ratepayers of the Metropolis one single penny. He maintained that action like this on the part of the Corporation of London evinced a public spirit which the House, he was sure, would cordially approve. It was only another evidence, added to many other evidences, which the City of London had invariably given of their great desire to meet the wants and wishes, not only of the inhabitants of the City proper, but of the larger portion of the Metropolis situated outside the area of the City. And now he would endeavour to show what the action of the Metropolitan Board of Works had been. He believed that the Metropolitan Board had referred the Report of the Select Committee to a Committee of their own, about the end of July last, unlike the action of the Corporation of London, for Report emerged from that Committee until the 7th of November, exhibiting a marked contrast to the speedy and energetic manner in which the Corporation of London had taken up the recommendations of the Select Committee of the House of Commons. Ultimately, the Metropolitan Board of Works, notwithstanding the views that were placed before them by many deputations upon the subject, declined to proceed with the recommendations of the Select Committee. And why? He gathered from the discussion which took place at the Board that they did not believe the City of London was in earnest in regard to the construction of the Bridge, a fear which, he was glad to say, had been altogether falsified by the result. In the next place, the Metropolitan Board were of opinion that the Select Committee was not a strong Committee; and, further, they did not see why they should be dictated to by a Committee of the House of Commons. As he (Mr. Ritchie) was a Member of the Select Committee, he would not say much about the Committee generally; but he would point out that they had in the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Sir Hussey Vivian) a Chairman of such strength as was not often equalled, and certainly could not be exceeded, upon any Committee of that House. He had the authority of that hon. Member for saying that he had rarely, if ever, presided over a stronger, or, indeed, as strong a Committee. If his hon. and gallant Friend the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works (Sir James McGarel Hogg) had addressed the House when moving the second reading of the Bill, he might probably have enlightened the House as to the reason why the Board of Works had not proceeded to carry out the recommendations of the Select Committee, but, unfortunately, by the course which his hon. and gallant Friend had taken, he (Mr. Ritchie) had been precluded from knowing what the case of the Metropolitan Board of Works was. He found that, in the Report which was made by the Committee of the Metropolitan Board, one or two reasons were given. The first was that it would be objectionable—

[illegible] railway immediately under the bed of the River, for which purpose it would be necessary to form a coffer-dam, and thereby interfere to a serious extent with the entrance to the London and the Surrey Commercial Docks, or else to construct the Tunnel at a much greater depth, involving the use of machinery for working and lifting the traffic on both sides of the River. That having regard to the stringent conditions as to the navigable waterway which were sought to be imposed upon the Board last Session in connection with their Bill for a railway at Nightingale Lane by wharfingers and others interested in the

navigation of the River, as well as the wharfingers adjacent to the site of the works, and to the objections raised by the Conservators to the interruption of the River traffic by cofferdams, the Board is of opinion that the opposition to the formation of a shallow subway at Shadwell by cofferdams would be of a formidable character."

What did those reasons amount to? If they were of any value at all, they would, of course, with equal force apply to any scheme. They equally went to prove that it would be impossible for the Metropolitan Board of Works to make any subway there at all; and he would ask why these two objections were not brought forward last year, when the Board were themselves before Parliament? They included a provision in their Bill for enabling them to pay propor and adequate compensation to the Conservators and wharfingers for any interference with their property; and if in this case any difficulty were to arise in that respect, it could be got over in precisely the same way. He might say, also, in reference to that declaration, that the objection existed just as strongly in 1882, when the engineer of the Metropolitan Board of Works recommended the construction of this very subway. The same difficulty was raised by the wharfingers and the Conservators as to the obstruction of the River traffic by the construction of the subway; and if there was one thing on which the Committee last year were more unanimous and agreed upon than another, it was that if the Metropolitan Board of Works, provided that their scheme was a scheme in the public interest, and one which was necessary in order to serve a great public purpose, desired to carry out this plan, they ought not to be deterred from proceeding with it by objections such as those which had been raised by the wharfingers or the Conservators. No doubt, some temporary inconvenience must be suffered while works of this nature were in progress. It was felt that in carrying out a great public object some little temporary inconvenience must have to be put up with; but such little temporary inconvenience was no reason why the works should not be carried out. If the wharfingers or Conservators could show that they were likely to sustain inconvenience of a serious character, it would have been possible to insert Wharfinger Clauses in the Bill to provide compensation for them for any injury they might suffer in consequence of the carrying out of the works. What the East End of London was now unanimously asking for was that the Metropolitan Board of Works should undertake a scheme that was approved by everybody. Nevertheless, they preferred last year to promote a scheme which was approved by no one, setting aside the proposal which originated from their own engineer, and which had received the unanimous consent of all the public Bodies concerned. It was unnecessary for him to urge the great and pressing need for this important public improvement. The House knew very well that improved means of communication had always developed the traffic of the Metropolis to an enormous extent, and there was no part of London where it was more necessary that something should be done to improve the condition of the traffic. Nevertheless, the Metropolitan Board of Works, in their present Bill, made no provision for a permanent communication by means of a crossing or a subway; but they did propose to make provision for establishing free ferries across the Thames at Woolwich and Greenwich. It was recognized that that would be a purely temporary accommodation, and it was recognized by no one more than the engineer of the Metropolitan Board himself, who pointed out, in reference to a Report in 1882, suggesting that ferries should be made for local traffic, that the establishment of ferries would be a serious mistake, as, for instance, in the case of New York, where it had been found impossible to conduct the traffic by means of ferries. So far as he could understand, the ferries proposed to be established by the Bill were simply a temporary means of communication, which could not and ought not, for a single moment, to stand in the way of that permanent communication for which the East End of London for a long series of years had been languishing, and would continue to languish, unless Parliament would bring some pressure to bear upon the Metropolitan Board of Works. It might be asked why it was that he came down to the House to propose the Resolution he had placed upon the Paper. His answer to that was that all matters affecting the Metropolis had always been considered by Parliament to be matters with which it

might fairly be asked to deal. In such an enormous area, with such a vast population, and with such important public interests, it had long been held that all matters affecting the Metropolis ought to be treated much more as Imperial questions than a mere measure promoted by an ordinary Corporate Body. If the proposal he had placed upon the Paper were assented to by the House, expressing regret that the Metropolitan Board of Works had not seen its way to carry out the recommendations of the Select Committee of last year, he desired to point out that it would in no way affect the position of the Bill. The only effect it would have upon the Bill would be that the Bill itself would have to be set down for a second reading on another day—perhaps Monday; and, therefore, it would be seen that if the suggestion in opposition to the Resolution were that the only effect of carrying it would be to delay the second reading of the Bill, the real result of adopting it would only be to delay the progress of the Bill for a day or two. He hoped the House of Commons would express a strong opinion that, after the careful recommendations which had been made in the Report of the Select Committee, it was the duty of the Metropolitan Board of Works to take up the question; and he hoped and believed that the result would be that next Session the Metropolitan Board would come forward with a proposal for the construction of this subway. He deeply regretted that they were not coming forward with that proposal now. One word more, and he would have done. Yesterday a deputation upon this subject waited upon the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir William Harcourt). He (Mr Ritchie) was asked whether he would accompany that deputation; but he declined to do so for two reasons—first, because he did not see what the Home Secretary could do in the matter except what he would probably do now, namely, give them a word of sympathy in regard to the wants and requirements of the East End of London—and, secondly, because he knew very well that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would readily take advantage of the presence of the deputation to read them a lecture on London Government. Therefore, as he would have been unable to follow the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and reply to the arguments made use of, he thought it was better that he should not accompany the deputation. He now found that what actually took place was exactly what he had anticipated. The Home Secretary, while expressing sympathy for the East End of London, took advantage of the opportunity—as he always took advantage of every opportunity—to read the deputation a lecture upon the apathy with which the scheme he had brought forward last Session for the reform of London Government had been regarded, and to tell them, further, that if they had not got subways, bridges, and crossings it was entirely their own fault. At the same time, he failed to see, from the remarks of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, what proof there was that, if the House had passed the Bill introduced by the Government last year, the people of London would have been one whit better off in this respect. In fact, he was very strongly of opinion that if they had had that Bill they would have been much worse off, because he remembered that one portion of the Government proposals was to abolish the existing Corporation of the City of London; and, at any rate, as that Corporation had not been abolished, the public had obtained this advantage from the existing state of things in the East End of London—that the Corporation were promoting the construction of a Bridge which, if Parliament consented to their proposals, would not cost the ratepayers generally one farthing. That, he maintained, was a very great advantage indeed, and even if it were not so the right hon. and learned Gentleman forgot, and many other people always appeared to forget, that London was not like Glasgow, or Liverpool, or Manchester—one homogeneous whole, but that it was composed of what might be regarded as half-a-dozen large towns, with aims entirely different, with objects wholly distinct and separate, and with hardly a single thing in common. Therefore, if the Bill of the Government had been passed, what chance would they have had in the East End of London, with the small influence they were likely to possess in a Central Board, of inducing the authorities to spend millions of money in opening up

communications across the River? If they had a Corporation of their own, of course they could have dealt with the matter themselves; but even then the result might not have been satisfactory, because, although the necessity for having these communications was admitted on all hands, there were a good many persons who would not be so anxious to pay for them. He did not wish, however, to enter into a discussion of the question of London Government; but he would venture to express a hope that, notwithstanding the fact that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary was not very much pleased with the people of London for not having adopted his scheme, the right hon. and learned Gentleman would say one or two words in sympathy with the wants and requirements of the East End of the Metropolis. He believed that such a declaration from the right hon. and learned Gentleman would have a good effect upon the Metropolitan Board of Works, and that next year they might be prepared with a Bill to give the people of the East End of London that which they were now asking for.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House regrets that the Bill contains no provision to confer powers on the Metropolitan Board of Works to carry out the recommendation of the Select Committee on the Metropolitan Board of Works (Thames Crossings) Bill, 1884, to the effect that two crossings being immediately required a subway at or near Shadwell should be constructed by the Metropolitan Board of Works,"—(*Mr. Ritchie,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, his hon. Friend had complained that an unusual course had been taken in moving the second reading of the Bill without entering into any explanation with regard to it. He thought that the speech of his hon. Friend, as well as the Resolution which he had moved, afforded ample justification for him (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg) for having said nothing until he heard what his hon. Friend had to say on behalf of himself and the Resolution. The Resolution now before the House, if not one of direct censure, certainly involved an indirect censure upon the Metropolitan Board of Works, although he dared say that his hon. Friend did not mean that. He (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg), for one, entertained the greatest possible consideration and respect, not only for that House, but for all the recommendations made by the House or by its Committees; but he ventured to say that Committees of the House of Commons were not always infallible, even if they were of the stupendous strength of the Committee of last year, as described by his hon. Friend. The Metropolitan Board of Works had had some experience of Committees; and he might say they found that sometimes a Committee of the House of Commons passed a strong Resolution in one way, and if the same Bill was introduced in another Session that Resolution was entirely reversed. That was certainly the experience which the Metropolitan Board of Works had acquired; and although they were anxious to treat the recommendations of the Committees of the House of Commons with every possible respect, it was the duty of the Metropolitan Board to go carefully into the recommendations of the Select Committee of last year, and to dissect them thoroughly. They had done so, and the result was the Bill which he held in his hand. He would not trouble the House with specifying every subject that was dealt with in the Bill, further than to say that it included subjects of the greatest possible importance to every district in the Metropolis. He would go at once to the points which had been raised by his hon. Friend with regard to the Report of Sir Joseph Bazalgette. That Report was made to the Metropolitan Board of Works when they wanted to ascertain the best means of establishing a communication between the two sides of the River below London Bridge; and he might here say that they always had, and did still, most thoroughly sympathize with a desire that existed, not only in the East End, but in other parts of the Metropolis, to have this communication established. The Metropolitan Board of Works had already proved their sympathy, because in 1879 they brought in a Bill to enable them to erect a High Level Bridge. That Bill was thrown out, and last year they brought in a Bill for the construc-

tion of a subway at Nightingale Lane. That Bill was also thrown out, and now they were bringing in a Bill for establishing and regulating ferries across the Thames at Woolwich and Greenwich. The reason they had not applied for subways was this—when their engineer was directed to report upon the subject, the Board of Works hoped that Her Majesty's Government would see their way to continuing the Coal and Wine Duties. He was sorry to say that they had not done so, and he regretted the step they had taken. He thought they had displayed a want of intelligence in not having taken advantage of the opportunity afforded to them. As a matter of fact, they refused to do anything of the sort; but when Sir Joseph Bazalgette was told by the Board to report, he suggested several schemes, all of which, if they could have been carried out, would have been of manifest advantage to the public. The cost, however, would have been very great. No doubt, when Sir Joseph Bazalgette reported with regard to the communications across the Lower Thames, he suggested, as his hon. Friend behind had stated, that there ought to be a bridge at the Tower, and two subways at Shadwell and Blackwall. That was quite true; but when the Metropolitan Board of Works found that they had not got the money for the construction of a bridge and two subways, they were obliged to reconsider their position. Unfortunately, it was very difficult for him, without a map to explain the matter clearly to the House, but those who were conversant with those localities would know that what would have been a great public convenience with two subways and one bridge, would not have been a convenience at all if there was only to be one subway. Therefore, the engineer of the Board of Works was directed to consider what would be the best means of communication below Bridge for the inhabitants generally, in the event of only one subway being provided. It must be borne in mind that the Metropolitan Board of Works could not take into consideration the wants of one district alone. They were bound to think of every locality concerned. They had studied the interests of all, and they maintained that the subway proposed to be made under the Bill which was brought in last year was the one which was best, and which, if constructed, would have been most conducive to the public interests. He was sorry he was obliged to leave the deliberations of the Committee on which he had had the honour to serve on account of stress of business elsewhere; but he could not withhold his opinion that the Committee were not right in what they did in rejecting the Preamble of the Bill, and that the recommendations which were come to afterwards were adopted without due consideration and without hearing the wharfingers. That statement might not meet the approval of the Committee; but he would point out to the House that a Motion was moved in the Committee itself by his hon. Friend opposite the Member for Wenlock (Mr. Brown), which proposed to add the words—

"Although the evidence of the wharfingers and others against such means of crossing would have to be considered."

That Amendment was rejected; but it was evident that some of the Members of the Committee thought that the case of the wharfingers ought to have been considered more than it was. His hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) had gone to a great deal of trouble in quoting a Report of the Metropolitan Board of Works in answer to representations made to them by various Vestries and District Boards. The engineer of the Metropolitan Board went most carefully into the question of the subway recommended by the Committee which his hon. Friend thought ought to have been made, but the Report of the Metropolitan Board of Works was as follows:

"To construct a subway immediately under the bed of the River, for which purpose it would be necessary to form a coffer-dam, and thereby interfere to a serious extent with the entrance to the London and the Surrey Commercial Docks, or to construct the Tunnel at a much greater depth, involving the use of mechanical means for lowering and lifting the traffic on both sides of the River."

That Report called attention to the importance of abstaining, as far as possible, from interfering with the traffic on the River, and that point was pressed strongly upon the Board by various persons who were interested in the traffic of the River. In addition they had this fact, that the House of Commons and Committees of the House

were very jealous of any proposal that was calculated to interfere in any shape or form with the traffic of the River. If the recommendation of the Select Committee that a subway should be constructed at or near Shadwell had been carried out, it would have been necessary to construct the tunnel at an enormous depth, which would have involved the use of hydraulic power, and the Board were confident that not only would the cost be excessive, but that the House of Commons would not consent to pass the scheme. His hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) had alluded to the fact that the Corporation of the City of London had kindly undertaken to make a bridge at the Tower. All he could say was that he believed they were perfectly right in doing so; and, instead of complaining of the Metropolitan Board of Works for not taxing the ratepayers unnecessarily, he thought they ought to be applauded for the course they had pursued, seeing that the City of London was now going to do the work out of their own funds. Under such circumstances, the Metropolitan Board of Works, as guardians of the public purse, would certainly have done wrong if they had undertaken this work at the expense of the ratepayers. The bridge would now be constructed by the Corporation of London without expense to anybody. But the undertaking of the City of London to construct this bridge had considerably changed and modified the place where the subway should be constructed, because if they were to have another crossing they must look lower down the River for a subway. The proposal of the Board of Works was to establish steam ferries, which he maintained would be very useful to the inhabitants on both sides of the River, and he did not see why they should not be permanently kept up. The inhabitants of Woolwich and Greenwich were quite satisfied, and these steam ferries would give accommodation to hundreds of thousands of working men who desired to cross from one side of the River to the other. He thought it was an act of presumption for the persons who waited yesterday upon the Home Secretary to arrogate to themselves that they represented everybody and everything. He did not propose to deliver a lecture upon London Government; but he might state that the Board of Works had also received a deputation from working men, who had represented their case in a very proper spirit. He had expressed to them the same sympathy which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt) had expressed, and he wished it was in the power of the Metropolitan Board of Works to do something for them; but he did not happen to be the Head of a Board of Guardians, or of a Relief Committee. The position he occupied was that of Chairman of a Body which was accountable for every penny of the public money they expended, and who were looked after in the most extraordinary and careful manner by the auditors. Therefore, with all their sympathy for the East End of London, they found it impossible to spend the money of the Board in relieving the necessities of these distressed people. There were many other things he should like to bring under the notice of the House; but he could not believe that the House would consent to carry this extraordinary Resolution, involving as it did a most undeserved vote of censure upon the Metropolitan Board of Works, who in this very Bill were trying to help every part of London—North, South, East, and West. He would reiterate that the case of the East End of London had been thoroughly and amply considered by a Committee of the Metropolitan Board of Works; but they could not confine their operations to one single district. It was their duty to consider the Metropolis at large, and he repudiated the idea that they would ever consent to give more consideration to one part of the Metropolis than another. The Board had a difficult duty to discharge, and they had endeavoured to discharge it to the best of their ability. The requirements of the East End of London had been considered in every shape and form, and they would be still further considered as far as was possible. He therefore hoped that the House would read the Bill a second time, and reject the Resolution which had been moved by his hon. Friend.

MR. FIRTH said, he thought that the hon. and gallant Member who had just sat down had laid down, in excellent terms, the principle on which the Metropolitan Board ought to proceed, and upon which

he thought, in this matter, they were proceeding. The suggestion made by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie was that the House should pass practically a vote of censure upon the Metropolitan Board for not including in their Bill this year a proposition to erect crossings over the Thames which would probably have involved an expenditure, charged on the whole of London, of a very considerable amount. With regard to the arguments used by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) as to the necessity of these communications, they were all agreed; but it was also requisite that that necessity should be supplied by an expenditure of money. And then came the question, "How was the money to be raised?" Whenever it was proposed to spend money, the principle was laid down that those who had to supply the money should give their consent. It appeared from the statement of the hon. Member opposite that the Report of the Select Committee of last year had been referred to a Committee of the Metropolitan Board of Works, with whom rested the discretion of fulfilling the condition as to supplying the money. Of course, it was highly desirable, when a scheme was proposed which would involve a large expenditure of public money, that some authority in which the public were duly represented should first give their consent to it. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets Mr. Ritchie praised the Corporation of the City of London for its generosity, because, forsooth, in their Tower Bridge Bill, they proposed to charge a Trust Estate—the Bridge House Estate—with the sum of £70,000 for the purpose of building the bridge. He did not object to the Bill being passed; but with respect to the suggestion that the Metropolitan Board of Works should expend a considerable sum in no with of the opinion being taken upon it of those who would have to provide the money, he thought it was [illegible] suggestion altogether. He failed to see why a vote of censure should be passed upon a spending body because they declined to spend the money of the inhabitants of the Metropolis upon a project of which they did not approve. References had been made to lectures on Local Government, but the only point connected with London Government involved in this case was the desirability of having in existence some directly representative Body who should control the expenditure of the money of the ratepayers. He had no wish to say anything personal to the hon. Member opposite; but he thought that a considerable amount of blame rested upon the hon. Member's shoulders for the condition of things which he condemned that day, and which he proposed to remedy by moving a vote of censure upon the Metropolitan Board of Works. He (Mr. Firth) should certainly oppose the Motion.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) deprecated very much the introduction into the discussion of lectures upon London Government; but the hon. Member had done something more practical than deliver a lecture upon London Government, because he had brought forward a Resolution which was properly described as a vote of censure, and a vote of want of confidence in one of the principal Bodies engaged in conducting the government of London. That was something that went a little further than a lecture, because the hon. Member wanted the House, by a direct vote, to condemn the Metropolitan Board of Works for the mode in which they conducted their own business. It was not necessary that he (Sir William Harcourt) should deliver any lecture on the government of London; because, if the House should by this vote assent to the Motion of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, it would entirely condemn the present government of London by a vote of censure upon the Metropolitan Board of Works. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets said that if the London Reform Bill of last year had been passed they would not have had the new bridge which was about to be constructed by the Corporation of London; but he (Sir William Harcourt) did not know why the work should not have been undertaken by the new Municipal Council, which would have charge of the Bridge House Estate of the Corporation, just as much as the Corporation had now. The hon. Member had asked for an expression of sympathy on his (Sir William Harcourt's) part with the East End of London. Certainly, that expression was freely granted to the constituents of the hon. Member in

the East End, and he had said so yesterday. It was granted all the more because they could not help themselves. They had no choice in the matter, and the Home Office could not help them. The Governing Bodies of London, whether good or bad, were the only persons from whom they could get help. How was Her Majesty's Government or the House of Commons to take the administration of the details of this work out of the hands of those to whom it had been intrusted? The Metropolitan Board of Works had power to raise the money to do the work, and they ought to be able to judge what work should be done, and what money should be spent upon it. If they were unable to judge of that, he did not know who could. How could a Legislative Body take out of the hands of an Administrative Body like the Metropolitan Board of Works the details of the administration in which they were engaged? How could they say to the Metropolitan Board of Works —"We think that you are not fit to undertake such work; but we insist upon your doing it, and we insist that you shall raise £2,000,000"—which he was told this work would cost—"and expend it in a certain way?" How could they say to this Legislative Body whose duty it was to raise the money, and to whom the whole administration of it was confided—"You shall spend £2,000,000, and raise the money by means of rates, whether you think it right to do the work or not?" He ventured to say that no Government and no Legislative Assembly would ever consent to say anything of the kind. The Metropolitan Board of Works had arrived at a decision. He did not say that they were right in the decision they had arrived at; but he had not himself spoken of them in the terms of condemnation used by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie). On a former occasion, the hon. Gentleman spoke of the Board of Works as if they were perfect, and now he was the first to condemn them.

MR. RITCHIE begged the right hon. and learned Gentleman's pardon. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was alluding now to a former debate which took place in that House. He had expressly stated that he by no means considered the Board of Works perfect, and he had also expressed the opinion that there was a large necessity for reform in their constitution.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was glad to find that the hon. Member was not what he believed him to be —namely, a trusty champion of the existing constitution of the London Government. The hon. Member must be perfectly aware that in other towns the richer portion of the population contributed to the wants of those who were not so fortunately circumstanced. The hon. Gentleman himself spoke of Glasgow and Liverpool as homogeneous. Had the hon. Gentleman ever been in Liverpool? Did he mean that all parts of Liverpool were exactly the same? Because, if so, he was altogether wrong. There were poor parts which corresponded with the East End of London, and so also in Glasgow; but in Liverpool and Glasgow there was a system of government by which the superfluities of the wealthy could be brought in in aid of the wants of the poor, and that was what was required in London. It could, however, only be done by having a proper representative Body, representing both sections of the people, to manage the details of the administration and to raise the money that was required for the wants of both. The Metropolitan Board of Works was a representative Body. He supposed that the hon. Gentleman did not think that it was a representative Body, and that was why he asked for a vote of want of confidence. With regard to this particular proposal, he could not himself undertake to pass a general vote of censure. Before doing so, it would be necessary to enter into a detailed examination, and that was not a duty which fell within the province of the Government. The Legislature had already decided the matter by constituting the Metropolitan Board of Works. There was one argument which everybody could understand, and that was that very large sums of money had been expended on the upper parts of the River in freeing the bridges; and the people below Bridge were entitled to proportionate consideration and outlay in respect of their means of getting across the River. No doubt, the money hitherto spent upon the River had been mainly for the benefit of those who inhabited the districts extending over the upper parts of it, and which affected what might, generally speaking, be

called the heart of the population of London. Similar considerations to those which had applied to the accommodation afforded above London Bridge did not apply to the lower part of the River, and consequently there had been a suggestion that subways should be constructed under the River for the benefit of the Eastern part of the Metropolis. He should have thought that the Metropolitan Board of Works would have done well to have considered the requirements of the East End of London; and he should have thought that the construction of the subway which had been recommended would have had some claim upon them for their favour. But he understood that the Metropolitan Board of Works had proposed a subway, and so far he could not see that they had failed in the discharge of their duty. Whether the subway ought to be made in the place proposed by the Board of Works, or at the place proposed by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), he had no means of judging.

Mr. RITCHIE remarked that a Select Committee might inquire.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he could not see how anybody outside the Metropolitan Board of Works could determine what work was to be done, or what amount of money should be expended. By all means, if the Metropolitan Board did not understand their work, remove and change them; but he did not believe that either the Government or the House of Commons could undertake the work of the Board. Therefore, he went back to the point with which he commenced. The Motion of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr Ritchie) was practically a vote of censure upon the Metropolitan Board. He shared to a great degree in that want of confidence in the existing government of London, and he was very much disposed to vote with the hon. Member in a Motion of this kind, which might lay a good foundation for the proposition that a great and sweeping change was necessary. Therefore he would not say that if the hon. Gentleman went to a division he would not vote with him. But, on the other hand, he must point out the extreme difficulty of endeavouring to force the Metropolitan Board of Works to undertake any particular work, and raise the money that was necessary for carrying it out.

Mr. BRYCE said, he would only say one or two words in endeavouring to show the House how simple the issue was against the Metropolitan Board of Works. The Metropolitan Board had admitted that communications were needed, and they had twice brought in a Bill which had gone before a Select Committee of the House, and been rejected on each occasion. The Board had further reported, through their own engineer, that these communications were necessary; and in that state of the facts the Board brought forward a proposal which went before a Committee last year, and as the Committee rejected it in favour of another proposal, the House, without further information upon the matter, must take it that the decision of the Committee was right. Whenever a measure was rejected by a Select Committee, the House was disposed to assume that the decision of the Committee was not to be disturbed. In this case there had been a long investigation, and he believed that the Committee, which was a strong one, had arrived unanimously at a clear decision. In that state of facts, the Metropolitan Board of Works in the very next year came forward with a Bill in which they took no steps whatever to give effect to the suggestions of the Select Committee. Having already admitted that the communications were necessary, having the decision of a tribunal of the House that they were needed, the Board of Works deliberately refused to take any action in the matter. Therefore, he thought that a very strong case indeed had been made out for condemning the inaction of the Metropolitan Board. To what cause that inaction was due he would not stop to discuss; but he wished to remind the House that there was a very strong feeling in London upon this subject. The East End of London had been altogether neglected, while hundreds of thousands of pounds had been expended upon communications in the upper part of the Thames. Under these circumstances, he confessed that he drew the conclusion which was not drawn by the hon. Gentleman opposite—that not only had the Metropolitan Board acted in this case with very little regard to the interests of the people of London, but that the case for a reform

of London Government which the feebleness or wilfulness of that Board disclosed was very strong indeed.

SIR HUSSEY VIVIAN said, that as he was Chairman of the Select Committee of last year, it was only fitting that he should say a few words on this question. He had no desire to censure the Metropolitan Board of Works. It was very unfortunate, he thought, that in a question of this kind, which seriously affected the material interests of 1,500,000 people, the question of censure upon the Metropolitan Board of Works should have been introduced at all. What the House had to do was to see that justice was done to the inhabitants of the Metropolis as far as they were able, and in supporting the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) he did not desire to convey any censure upon the action of the Metropolitan Board. All he desired to express was a strong opinion that the Metropolitan Board of Works ought to take measures to afford facilities for the communication across the Thames of large bodies of the people who lived East of London Bridge. The case stood thus—something like 1,500,000 people resided East of London Bridge, in a space about four miles in length. The proposition of the Metropolitan Board, last year, which came before the Select Committee, was to construct a subway at a cost of £1,900,000, or, in round numbers, of £2,000,000, at a point only one mile East of London Bridge. Therefore, it was clear that the population, for three miles below, would be very inadequately accommodated. And the Metropolitan Board proposed to do this without consulting the wishes of those who resided North of the River Thames and East of London Bridge. It was a very painful fact that a serious opposition was raised to the Bill before the Committee by every public body North and East of London Bridge. He felt that to be a very important matter. The Committee had before them what he might almost call the scandal of an enormous expenditure of money going on on account of disputes between the Metropolitan Board of Works and the whole of the public bodies representing the inhabitants of the North-East of London. A great many eminent counsel were employed in the case, and the investigation of the Select Committee lasted for 20 days. For his own part he had approached the question, as he was sure every Member of the Committee approached it, with an entirely unbiased mind. If he had any bias at all it was the belief that a Body like the Metropolitan Board of Works would have duly weighed and considered the question before they came to Parliament to authorize the expenditure of so large a sum of money. But as the investigation proceeded it became evident that they had not done so. The evidence proved that the consideration of the case by the Metropolitan Board of Works was of an extremely brief and perfunctory character. The Committee had it in evidence that it was on the 8th of October, 1883, that they instructed their surveyor to report as to the best means of crossing the River Thames below London Bridge. That Report was brought up on the 15th of October; on the 22nd it was approved, and on the 26th it was adopted. Therefore, only one week elapsed during which the engineer of the Metropolitan Board of Works could consider this most important question, and only six day days elapsed before the Report of the engineer was adopted by the Board of Works. Where £2,000,000 were being spent and 1,500,000 people accommodated, greater consideration should be given to the case than had been given to it by the Metropolitan Board of Works. When the matter came to be investigated, they found that the proposal of the Metropolitan Board was a mere compromise. They had to consider the question of the remedying of congested traffic at London Bridge and the accommodation of a large population stretching down the Thames for four miles; and when they endeavoured to meet these two cases they effected a compromise—and compromises, as hon. Members knew, were as a rule very bad things. It became evident that no one was satisfied with the arrangement which had been proposed by the Metropolitan Board of Works. The whole of the population interested were opposed to it, and it became evident that not only would this £2,000,000 have to be expended, but that a further £2,000,000 would have to be raised for the construction of a subway lower down the river. They had reason to believe that the Corporation of London, with funds which they had at

their disposal—the Bridge House Estate Funds, which could only be devoted to Metropolitan bridges—would construct a bridge where they were now proposing to construct it—at Tower Hill. That bridge would deal with the difficulty and the obstruction and congestion of traffic on London Bridge. It would be within half-a-mile of London Bridge, and remedy that portion of the difficulty. Then it became more evident that a subway ought to be constructed lower down the River, and the Committee had suggested that that should be made—that a subway should be constructed at Shadwell, where the surveyor of the Metropolitan Board of Works had proposed to construct a subway. The Committee had reason to believe that there was no substantial difficulty in the way of the construction of such a subway, and therefore they ventured to suggest that this would be the right way of solving this difficult problem. The Metropolitan Board of Works might complain that two Parliamentary Committees had considered the proposals they had made, and had rejected them. He (Sir Hussey Vivian) felt sure that last year's Committee had rejected the proposals submitted to them on very good grounds. The Committee thought that it would be in the interest of the Metropolitan Board if, after the very protracted and careful investigation they had conducted, they could make such a suggestion as would probably be carried by Parliament when next proposed. Therefore it was that they suggested that a tunnel should be constructed at Shadwell, and he very much regretted that the Metropolitan Board of Works had not availed themselves of the suggestion, and proposed to carry out that or some analogous scheme. He believed it due to the great body of ratepayers living to the East of London Bridge that this communication should be made. The expenditure on the bridges above London Bridge had been very heavy indeed—about £1,300,000 having been expended in freeing bridges from tolls. In order to do this, the ratepayers of the Metropolis were taxed. The ratepayers in the East of London did not escape, but were taxed with the rest on account of the bridges above London Bridge, though they got very little or no benefit from them. The Committee over which he presided had certainly thought it was incumbent on the Metropolitan Board of Works to meet the wants of the people living to the East of London Bridge, and he must say that he regretted that that matter had not been dealt with. He supposed it could not be dealt with now, because the necessary Parliamentary Notice could not be given; but he trusted that if this discussion had no other result, it would, at any rate, have the effect of bringing strong pressure to bear on the Metropolitan Board of Works to induce them to carry out such a work as the Committee had suggested, and as he believed it was their duty to carry out, for the benefit of the inhabitants of the North-East of London.

Mr. MARRIOTT said, there was no Question before the House—as might be gathered from the speeches which had been delivered—in relation to a Bill for the better government of London. The only question was, whether the Bill of the Metropolitan Board of Works of this year was a right one or a wrong one? Now, with regard to these bridges, the Metropolitan Board felt as much as anyone else the wants of those who lived in the East of London, and desired as much as anybody to meet those wants with regard to means of communication between the two shores of the Thames. In 1879 the Board brought in a Bill for the purpose of affording that communication, and they brought in another last year; but both measures had been rejected by Parliamentary Committees. He did not wish to blame the Committees—he would not say whether they were right or wrong in the course they had taken; but they had rejected them, and what had occurred this year? Why, the Corporation of London had brought in a Bill to construct a bridge below London Bridge, and those who had the charge of the money of the ratepayers of the Metropolis said that they would not move in the matter of a subway. If they did propose such a scheme, what would happen? Why, there would be two Committees sitting in the House, one considering the measure brought in by the Corporation of the City of London, and the other inquiring into the merits of the scheme promoted by the Metropolitan Board. There would be two Committees. Why two Committees? The Committees were not acting together, and they could not do so. What

the Metropolitan Board said was that they would not propose any bridge, but would propose means which would be a great advantage to the poorer classes who lived on the North and South sides of the Thames. They proposed to establish two free ferries, which would be, no doubt, of immense benefit to the inhabitants of Woolwich, Poplar, and Greenwich. With regard to the tunnel, it was a very serious matter, and would require an enormous amount of scientific opinion. It interfered with a great many rights; and whether they had a Central Government for London or not, it would not simplify the passing of such a scheme, because it would still be necessary to come to the House of Commons and submit the proposal to a Parliamentary Committee before they could obtain sanction to it. It was not the City of London or the Metropolitan Board of Works that stood in the way of the improvements; it was the House of Commons itself which had declined to allow the Metropolitan Board of Works to do what it proposed to do on a former occasion. The Metropolitan Board of Works, looking at the present position of the question, considered that it would be desirable, while experiments were going on, to supply these ferries. No doubt, the House would be of opinion that no vote should be passed throwing upon them work which they could not possibly perform this year; and he therefore thought that, so far from deserving a vote of censure, they had endeavoured to meet the wants of the people of the East of London, and had exercised a wise judgment in the action they had taken.

Mr. A. H. BROWN said, that the hon. and learned Member who had just sat down had shown some arguments why the Metropolitan Board of Works should not be called upon to promote a Bill this year for the construction of a bridge below London Bridge. The fact was, as anyone who sat on the Committee of last year knew, that below London Bridge there was an enormous population growing up and rapidly developing manufacturing interests, all of whom felt most intensely the want of sufficient communication across the Thames. Then it had been said that it was as well to save the pockets of the ratepayers, and that the Metropolitan Board of Works should not be asked to make this tunnel for the benefit of Shadwell. That would have been an argument to use last year; but it was no good now. Last year the Metropolitan Board of Works came down and asked Parliament to sanction the expenditure of £2,000,000 for the purpose of providing efficient means for crossing the Thames; but now they refused to come to the House for any sum of money for the same purpose. Everyone who knew anything about the district was well aware that there was a great and increasing traffic on the River at the point in question, consequent on the increased population in the neighbourhood. There was only one Authority in London which could take the matter in hand, and that was the Metropolitan Board of Works; and therefore he regretted that they had not proposed to construct a tunnel at Shadwell this year, Shadwell being, in the opinion of the engineer of the Metropolitan Board of Works, the right place for it.

Mr. RITCHIE said, that his object had been to obtain an expression of opinion. He was satisfied with the expression of opinion which had been given, and he would not, therefore, ask the House to divide upon the Question.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member withdraw his Motion?

Mr. RITCHIE: Yes.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED MISCONDUCT OF EMERGENCY MEN AT CLARE ISLAND, CO. MAYO.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Government are aware that the Emergency men quartered on Clare Island (county Mayo) are in the habit of obtaining and consuming liquor at a public-house on Sundays, in contravention of the Sunday Closing Act, without any notice being taken of the practice by the police; whether the resulting intoxication has recently led to several disorderly and dangerous acts, one being the discharge of a revolver, by an Emergency man, at a dog, to the peril of the owner of the dog, who was

standing by at the moment, and another being "a stand-up fight," in the presence of a number of persons, between an Emergency man and a policeman; whether the police have information that the Emergency men are suspected of plundering hen-roosts by night; and, what steps will be taken to deal with the circumstances stated, and also with the fact that these Emergency men are in the habit of carrying and displaying fire-arms?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: In *The Western People* newspaper of the 21st ultimo, there were published an anonymous letter and a leading article which taken together contained all the specific charges against the police and Emergency men in Clare Island which are included in this Question. Inquiry was at once made by the police authorities with the result that there was shown to be no foundation for the charges, with the exception that it did appear that one of the Emergency men some time ago fired his revolver at a dog which had been sent to drive away some sheep that he was taking to the pound; but it is not true that the owner of the dog was near, or in any danger. The man was cautioned as to the use he made of his revolver; and with this exception it did not appear that there had been any display of their fire-arms by the Emergency men, who are reported to be well-conducted.

EGYPT—THE COURBASH.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Globe* of 3rd March, to the effect—

"That, without the usual delays and formalities attending the action of the tribunals, four men belonging to the village of Matarieh were courbashed, the reason given being "the increasing insolence of the native population towards Englishmen,

and an alleged assault by some of the villagers on two unarmed Hussars; whether inquiry will be made as to the nature of the provocation given by the Hussars; how is it they went about unarmed, and, whether the punishment inflicted on their alleged assailants was not in direct contravention of the undertaking to abolish the courbash?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, Whether there is any truth in the circumstantial statement published in *The Standard* of the 3rd March, and substantially repeated in several journals, that an alleged assault, in a village in Lower Egypt, was punished by the Egyptian Military Police by way of lynching, without trial; the village being surrounded, a statement implicating certain persons extorted from the Sheiks by threat of immediate flogging, and the persons so implicated being tied to a tree in front of the Mosque, and flogged, first with a stirrup leather, and then with a courbash, by the Military Police; and, if he is not informed, whether he will at once inquire and ascertain whether such things have happened under the reformed *régime*; particularly whether what was done was a mere rough reprisal by British Military, or was really the act of the Military Police, enrolled under European officers for the express purpose of maintaing the Law; and, if in the latter case, he can give an assurance that the Police officers will be adequately dealt with?

MR. M'COAN asked, Whether it was not the fact that the only tribunal to which the men assaulted could have carried their case was the Court of the Cadi, in which Christian evidence was not admissible?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In reply to my hon. Friend, and to a similar Question put by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, I have to state that the Foreign Office have as yet received no information with regard to this occurrence; but they cannot undertake to exercise minute supervision over the administration of Egypt. Inquiry will, however, be made as to the facts. I cannot answer the Question of the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. M'Coan).

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN ADVANCE ON INDIA.

MR. CHAPLIN asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Government received, several months ago, important information with regard to the advance of the Russian Forces towards Herat and the Frontier of India, from a high official and military authority in India, to the following effect:—

"Russia can, in from 50 to 100 days after the orders are spread from the War Office, put 95,000 regular Troops in positions from which we can hardly drive her, and from which she can undertake the invasion of India at her own

convenience, and with a very fair prospect of success;"

whether the same authority did not make urgent recommendations in regard to that advance; and, whether Her Majesty's Government considered that information to have been reliable; and, if so, whether he is able to state, consistently with the public interest, what steps, if any, Her Majesty's Government have taken in consequence?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I understand the hon. Gentleman's Question to refer to a Memorandum which was privately circulated in India by the Quartermaster General, but which has not been officially submitted by him to the Government of India. In these circumstances, the Government decline to express any opinion upon the subjects discussed in the Memorandum. Even if it were desirable in the public interest—which I certainly do not think it is—it would not be possible to make any statement as to the steps which have been taken by the Government of India in regard to these matters.

MR. CHAPLIN: Do I understand from that answer that the noble Marquess has received the information to which I have referred?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have received the Memorandum, which I presume has also been received by the hon. Gentleman in the same manner.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND) — LEGISLATION.

MR. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, When the Government intend to introduce a Bill dealing with Reformatory and Industrial Schools in Ireland?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Irish Government and the Home Office have been in communication on the subject of legislation for carrying out certain suggestions of the Royal Commission on Reformatory and Industrial Schools which extended to the United Kingdom; but I am not in a position to say anything as to the introduction of a Bill on this subject.

EXPLOSIVES ACT, 1876 (IRELAND).

MR. DEASY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is compulsory on Public Boards in Ireland to appoint Inspectors under the Explosives Act of 1876; and, what responsibility do those Boards incur by making such appointments?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, it was the duty of the Local Authorities to appoint Inspectors under the Explosives Acts, and if they did not perform that duty they would have the responsibility which attached to Public Bodies which refused to perform the duty imposed by Parliament. In order to facilitate the matter, and not to put the Local Authorities in Ireland to unnecessary expense, the Government of Ireland had, he believed, signified their permission that the Constabulary might be employed as Inspectors if the Local Authorities thought fit to do so.

MR. DEASY asked, whether the same responsibility would attach to the constable appointed as would to a private individual if a private individual was appointed?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: So I understand. He would be the Inspector appointed by the Local Authority.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND).

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what legal authority he founds his statement of the 2nd instant, that magistrates in Ireland are entitled to do what the magistrates of England are prohibited from doing, by a Judgment of the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice (13th June, 1882), namely, forbidding a lawful assembly or procession, because information had been shown that such assembly or procession, if held, would tend to a breach of the peace?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Question of the hon. Member does not quite accurately recite what I stated. I did not say that magistrates in England are prohibited from stopping processions. Magistrates in both countries, in the exercise of their discretionary powers for the preservation of the peace, are bound to have regard to the law as laid down in their respective countries. Without laying down any abstract proposition of law on the subject, I stated that the law in Ireland, as interpreted by the highest Court there, justified the action of the magistrates in the particular case of the intended procession in Derry.

BOARD OF TRADE—PAY OF LIGHT-KEEPERS, GREAT BRITAIN.

Mr. SEXTON asked the President of the Board of Trade, What is the allowance made to light-keepers in England as good conduct pay, and if this allowance is of a fixed amount, or increases according to length of service; what allowance is made to light-keepers in England for fog signal duties, and if it is permanent or only during continuance of fog; what is the allowance to light-keepers in England in lieu of gardens where no land is attached to stations; what is the allowance to female assistants at single light stations on the English coast; what is the extent of the inequality existing in this service between England and Ireland in respect to those several allowances; why the inequality exists; and, whether it will be ended?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, he had a very long answer to the Question; and, if the hon. Member would permit him, would send it to him in writing.

NAVY—THE ROYAL YACHT "VICTORIA AND ALBERT."

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the repairs of Her Majesty's Yacht, *Victoria and Albert*, have been completed; if so, will he inform the House the total amount expended upon the hull, engines, cabins, and general outfit; also the intended complement of officers and crew, together with the probable annual cost for wages, provisions, fuel, and other stores; and, if he can state how often, and in what service, the yacht is to be employed; also if it be correct that the Lords of the Admiralty have authorised a large sum to be expended in the erection of a special shed for the storage of coals for the Queen's yachts?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: The repairs to the *Victoria and Albert* will be completed in a fortnight. The original Estimate as stated to Parliament was £55,000; the actual cost will be £58,000. The chief items in the additional expenditure are alterations of the bridge, which were desirable for the safe navigation of the vessel, and an improved fire service. The complement of the yacht and tenders is 157, or, including 75 riggers, 232. The details of the annual cost were given to Parliament in a Return ordered by the House in 1883. The net amount is £7,968. The crew are continuous service men, all of whom are available in time of war for the general service of the Navy. The full pay of the officers is the chief item in the extra net annual cost. No sum has been taken in the Estimates for a coal shed. It is impossible to state beforehand on what services the yacht may be employed.

NAVY—SHIPBUILDING—PRIVATE SHIPBUILDERS.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will be good enough to inform the House the number and description of ships for which he has accepted tenders from private shipbuilders; whether the lowest tenders have in all cases been accepted alike for ships and machinery; and, if it is correct that the Admiralty have declined allowing builders, who have not hitherto built torpedo boats, to tender for this type of craft without first building experimental specimens at their own cost?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Tenders have been accepted for six *Scouts*. In their invitations calling for tenders for shipbuilding, the Admiralty expressly state that they do not bind themselves to accept the lowest tender. They accept, in all cases, the tender which is considered best for the Public Service. It happens in this instance to have been the lowest. It has been thought desirable that the recent invitations to tender for 10 first-class torpedo boats should be addressed to those firms who have the greatest experience in the special work required; but the Admiralty are anxious to encourage a more general competition, and they propose to invite firms to build experimental boats on their own design, which they will be prepared to accept on condition that a minimum speed is realized.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—MEETINGS OF THE NATIONAL LEAGUE—INTRUSION OF THE POLICE AT CASHEL.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether two policemen intruded themselves at a meeting held in Cashel on the 22nd February last, which was presided over by the Very Rev. Dean Quirk, Parish Priest of Cashel;

whether the Very Rev. Chairman strongly protested against the intrusion; if the policemen still remained, stating they had authority from their superior officer to attend the meeting; and, whether the Government approves of policemen forcing themselves on lawful and peaceful meetings; and, if not, whether they will issue instructions to prevent a repetition of such conduct?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A sergeant and constable were directed to attend this meeting of the local branch of the National League, and request admittance. They entered the meeting without any objection being made, and, therefore, did not formerly request admittance. On the Chairman asking their authority for being present, the sergeant produced the written order, which showed the condition on which he was directed to attend. Although remarks were made on the presence of the two policemen, they were not expressly asked to retire, and the sergeant thought he was justified in remaining. I consider that this was an error of judgment, and that they ought to have withdrawn when the meeting objected to their presence.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will be good enough to state why he thinks it necessary that policemen should intrude themselves upon these peaceable meetings of the National League?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: According to the published report in the newspaper of a previous meeting there was a direct incitement to violence in one of the resolutions.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR: Arising out of this Question, I have to ask the Chief Secretary if he has received a letter from the Very Rev. Dean Quirk, who presided over the meeting, in which the following occurred:—

"Now I have to complain of this most unwarrantable and, to us, most offensive proceeding. I am determined that there shall be no violation of the law, and all present are similarly disposed. One of your predecessors, Mr. Trevelyan, said that police should not attend National League meetings unless there was some special reason for their doing so."

He would ask whether the Stipendiary, Captain Slacke, had any authority for instituting such a system of espionage over a respectable body of Irishmen; and, whether the English Government believed it would tend to promote the interests of law and order?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes, Sir; I have received that letter from the rev. gentleman, to which I have replied. I have given in my answer to the hon. Member, and the other hon. Members who have addressed me to-day, an answer tantamount to that addressed to the rev. gentleman.

MR. DEASY: I would wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman if a warrant in such cases discloses the reason for the intrusion of the police?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; it does not disclose the reason.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — APPOINTMENT OF ROMAN CATHOLICS, CO. CLARE.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state the number of Catholics appointed to the Commission of the Peace in county Clare within the past two years; if Colonel Lloyd, recently appointed Justice of the Peace for Knock District, county Clare, is a stranger and a Protestant; and whether he is aware that the district is almost exclusively Catholic; if it is a fact that the only property he has in the county is about sixty acres of land, which he rents; and, whether the Irish Government purpose to redeem their pledge of last year, to appoint to the Commission of the Peace in Ireland a just proportion of eligible Catholics?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand 11 gentlemen have been appointed to the Commission of the Peace in the County Clare within the past two years, three of whom are believed to be Roman Catholics. Colonel Lloyd is a Protestant, and the district in which he will serve has certainly a very large Roman Catholic population; but it is inaccurate to describe him as a stranger, or as having only 60 acres of land. He has a residence, and farms about 250 acres in the county. The Lord Chancellor, with whom the appointment of county magistrates rests, is most anxious, whenever he properly can, to redress any religious inequality on the Magisterial Bench, and thus carry into practice the declaration made by the late Chief Secretary.

MR. KENNY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that he only farms 60

acres of land in the district, and that there are Catholic gentlemen who farm 1,000 and 2,000 acres of land who have been refused appointment by the Lord Chancellor on account of their religion?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know anyone—I am sure that no one would be—excluded by the Lord Chancellor on account of religion. If the names are submitted to the Lord Chancellor, he will inquire as to the most suitable.

Mr. KENNY: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Lord Lieutenant of the county refuses to send forward the names of Catholic gentlemen sent to him?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: If the names are sent forward direct to the Lord Chancellor, he will take care to inquire into them.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE COMMONERS AT ST ALBANS.

Mr. BRYCE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the prosecution of certain of the inhabitants of Saint Albans for pulling down the fences of an inclosure made upon a large strip of roadside waste or common land, in violation of what they conceived to be their rights; whether he is aware that the Bench of Magistrates inflicted fines upon these people, most of whom were working men, amounting, with damages and costs, altogether to a sum of £111 7s. (of which £30 was subsequently remitted; whether he is aware that the fences have been re-erected at their own expense by some of the defendants; and, whether, under the special circumstances of the case, and considering that the defendants acted on behalf of what they believed to be public rights, he will advise the remission of the fines not yet paid, and direct the amounts already paid to be refunded?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I carefully inquired some weeks ago into this case. It is true that the fines imposed were large; but the Chairman of the Bench reported to me—and here I wish to draw special attention to the important words in the hon. Member's Question, "that the defendants acted on behalf of what they believed to be public rights"—that the judgment of the Court was based on the remarkable fact that the defendants were shown to have been given two legal opinions adverse to the mode of proceeding which they adopted. Therefore, the Court came to the conclusion that the defendants were not justified in the course which they took. Appeals were lodged on behalf of the defendants, but they have not been proceeded with; and, under those circumstances, I thought that I ought not to interfere.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. VAUGHAN MONTGOMERY, J.P.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Vaughan Montgomery, J.P. against whom an abortive prosecution was directed, is to be retained in the Commission of the Peace?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Lord Chancellor inquired into this case, and called upon Mr. Montgomery for an explanation of his conduct in connection with a claim which he made to vote at the Cootehill Poor Law election last year. Mr. Montgomery having failed to give a satisfactory explanation, the Lord Chancellor deemed it his duty to remove him from the Commission of the Peace. This decision was communicated to Mr. Montgomery on the 24th of January last.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (IRELAND) BILL.

Viscount CRICHTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If that portion of the Irish Judicature Bill dealing with the District Registrars of the Court of Probate was submitted to the Judge of that Court before its introduction into this House, in accordance with the pledge given last year by the late Chief Secretary, in reply to a Question, that any Bill dealing with such Registrars would be so submitted; if not, why was this pledge not fulfilled; and, whether any, and, if so, which, of the Judges were so consulted?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I find that my right hon. Predecessor did say in March last year that the Judge of the Court of Probate would be consulted as to proposals which were then in contemplation affecting the District Registries of his Court. The Lord Chancellor had previously communicated

to the Judge the intentions of the Government on this subject, and the proposals then in view are embodied in the present Bill, which deals with the whole judicature. The precise statement of the late Chief Secretary was overlooked; but the Government will be quite willing to consider any objections which the Judge of the Court of Probate may now offer to the poposals of the Bill in the points referred to.

MR. GIBSON: Is it intended to submit these parts of the Bill to the Judge of the Court of Probate for his approbation?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know whether it is intended that the Bill should be submitted to him as it is now before the House. If the Judge of the Court of Probate has any observations to make, they will be carefully considered.

ORDNANCE SURVEY—THE SALE OF ORDNANCE MAPS.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If it is true that the Government have granted to one firm of booksellers a monopoly of the sale of ordnance maps in England for a term of years; and, if so, what consideration has been given for this privilege, and why were not open tenders invited from the trade for so valuable a concession?

MR. HIBBERT: A temporary arrangement has been made to the effect stated, under pressure of circumstances, until January 1, 1887, when the new general arrangements will come into force, after public competition. Messrs. Stanford were selected because they already did the largest business in ordnance maps. The trade remains in the same position as before, Messrs. Stanford being bound to give the same discount to them as was allowed by the Office of Works.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — OVER-PRESSURE IN BOARD SCHOOLS—DR. CRICHTON BROWNE'S REPORT.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether any action has been taken by the Department, or the London School Board, in consequence of Dr. Crichton Browne's Report, presented last year to Parliament; and, whether anything is likely to be done to mitigate the evils of over-pressure therein declared to exist?

MR. MUNDELLA: The London School Board is at present conducting a searching inquiry into the allegations made in Dr. Crichton Browne's Report, all of which relate to London schools. The Education Department has taken no steps in consequence of that Report, inasmuch as long before anything was heard of it provisions were introduced into the Code which, by general testimony, have done all that the Central Government can do to prevent over-pressure.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—SCHOOL BOARD TAXATION.

LORD ALGERNON PERCY asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether, before moving the Education Estimates, he will lay before Parliament a separate statement of the Local Taxation imposed by School Boards throughout Great Britain?

MR. MUNDELLA: I shall be very happy to give the noble Lord the statement he requires as soon as the audited accounts have been furnished to the Department. There are still a large number to come in; and I hope they will come in before I make my annual Statement.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—EXPENSES OF CANDIDATES — LEGISLATION.

MR. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General, When the Government intend to set about the fulfilment of their promise, made last year, to initiate legislation on the subject of the expenses of candidates at Parliamentary elections; and, whether they mean to bring forward a distinct measure, or to include their proposals on this subject in any Bill now before the House?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), in reply, said, he had not forgotten the promise made by the Prime Minister last Session that there should be some legislation on the subject of candidates' expenses at uncontested Parliamentary Elections. He was sorry to say, however, that a good deal of agitation was now being raised to increase the expenses of Returning Officers at elections in view of the extension of the hours of polling, and the Under

Sheriffs had taken such action that he thought it necessary to listen to what they had to say before doing anything.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE IRELAND—ASSAULT ON DENIS MURPHY, CASTLEISLAND, CO KERRY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What are the facts connected with the wounding of Denis Murphy at Castleisland, county Kerry?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have not yet received a full Report on this subject, and will ask the hon. Member to be good enough to allow me to postpone answering his Question for a few days.

EGYPT THE NILE RAILROAD.

Mr. CHAPLIN asked the Secretary of State for War, If he can state what are Lord Wolseley's proposals, of which he spoke on Tuesday, with regard to the continuance of the Nile Railroad, and whether Her Majesty's Government have yet made up their minds on the subject; whether it is the fact that the making of about 220 miles of Railway, in different sections, along certain parts of the Nile between Wady Halfa and the south end of the Hanneth cataract, would afford the means of continuous communication either by rail or by water, navigable for steamboats or other large boats, the whole of the way from Siout to Ambukol at all seasons of the year; was such a railroad commenced by the ex-Khedive of Egypt, and were large quantities of rails and other materials transported beyond Wady Halfa, and deposited on the banks of the Nile for its construction; can he say whether there is any of that material left on the Nile, and still available for that purpose; has the whole of the route necessary for such a railroad along the banks of the Nile, and again from Ambukol across the Desert to Khartoum, been already thoroughly surveyed by a competent engineer, and are the facilities for making it infinitely greater than for making a Railway from Suakin to Berber; were the Government advised by Lord Wolseley to make any part or parts of the railroad along the Nile for purposes of transport last year; and, can he say when it is proposed to despatch the reinforcements, asked for by Lord Wolseley, to Korti?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Lord Wolseley originally proposed to continue the Wady Halfa Railway—which was completed when we commenced operations from Angash to Sarras—to a more southerly terminus at Absarat. Later he has restricted his proposals to an extension from Sarras to Ferket, about 62 miles to the southward, and above the Dal rapids. Of this extension 15 miles have been already constructed. He also requires light tramways to be laid at Fatmeh and Kaibar, where there are cataracts. It is believed that with this assistance there will be a practicable route by rail and water available at all seasons as far as Korti. The ex-Khedive commenced the Wady Halfa Railway, and laid the rails as far as Sarras, leaving at Wady Halfa 16 miles of rails. These have been utilized in the extension of 15 miles to which I allude above, and no other materials remain available on the spot. The route has been surveyed for the purpose of a permanent railway, involving heavy rock cuttings, possibly some tunnels, and one or more bridges across the Nile. The line required by Lord Wolseley is a surface railway, and the facilities for its construction—the presence of an enemy in the neighbourhood excepted—are probably less than those for the construction of the line from Suakin to Berber. Last summer Lord Wolseley recommended the extension of the railway towards Ambukol, which was sanctioned; but the work was stopped by him on the 28th of October in consequence of the dearth of native labour. Subsequently operations were resumed, with the result I have already mentioned. Lord Wolseley does not wish to have reinforcements on the Upper Nile before the autumn. We have been in almost daily communication with Lord Wolseley on the subject; but have only just received the information necessary for coming to a decision, which will be arrived at without delay.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: Will the cost of this railway be a charge on the taxpayers of this country, or on the finances of Egypt?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I am afraid it will be a charge on the taxpayers of this country.

Afterwards,

MR. CHAPLIN asked the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War a Question arising out of that put by him just now with reference to the Nile Railway. He understood the noble Marquess to say that facilities for making a permanent railroad along the Nile would be less than the facilities from Suakin to Berber. What he wished to know was, Whether that observation applied to the making of a purely military line along the Nile?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir; I think so; but it is only a matter of opinion. I adhere to that opinion. At Suakin we have a base on the sea to which all our necessary plant can be forwarded without any great difficulty. At Wady Halfa the base is a considerable distance inland; and it is necessary to forward the plant first to Cairo, then from Cairo to Assiout, and finally by water transport a considerable distance to Wady Halfa.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE BATTLE OF TAMAI—MR. CATHIE, R.N.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether Mr. Cathie, a gunner in the Royal Navy, who was recommended by General Graham for bravery at the battle of Tamai, has as yet received any recognition for his services on that occasion?

MR. CAINE (who replied) said: The notice of Mr. Cathie in Major General Graham's despatch is in these words—

"Brigadier General Buller also specially noticed Mr. R. A. Cathie, gunner, of Her Majesty's ship *Sphinx*."

This favourable mention of Mr. Cathie in the despatch will not be lost sight of; but it is not proposed to confer upon him any special mark of recognition.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: Will there be a reward of any kind?

MR. CAINE: No reward of any kind, beyond the recognition he has received with the despatch.

NAVY—ORPHANS OF WARRANT OFFICERS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he can state when the Admiralty will come to a decision on the subject of granting a compassionate allowance to the orphans of Warrant Officers in the Royal Navy?

MR. CAINE (who replied) said: In dealing with the question of the grant of compassionate allowances to the children of Warrant Officers of the Navy who lose their lives in the service of the Crown, the Admiralty have thought it expedient to consult the Secretary of State for War, similar claims being under consideration in the Army. I trust that an early decision will be arrived at.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS NOT SUPPORTED BY PRIVATE SUBSCRIPTIONS — SCALE OF FEES.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If he will state the number, if any, of voluntary schools which have no income from private subscriptions, but which are supported by school fees and Government grants; and if he will state the scale of fees usually adopted in those schools?

MR. MUNDELLA: I cannot at once supply the information asked, as the Return will require the examination of the balance-sheets of 19,000 schools; but I shall be very happy to settle with the hon. Member the form of a Return which will give such information at the expiration of a year. I think it should refer to all schools—Board and Voluntary.

MINES REGULATION ACT—USWORTH COLLIERY EXPLOSION.

MR. BURT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will appoint a competent legal gentleman to represent the Home Office at the Coroner's inquiry into the explosion at Usworth Colliery?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, a competent legal gentleman had already been appointed.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—LISTS OF CASUALTIES.

MR. BRYCE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, considering the delays which have occurred in publishing the lists of casualties to non-commissioned officers and privates serving in the Soudan, and the anxiety of the relatives of these soldiers as to their safety, the War Office can arrange to have complete lists of killed and wounded

published in England as soon as they are received from Egypt; and, whether he will impress on the military authorities in the field the importance of supplying such lists of casualties to private soldiers, as well as to officers, as soon as they can possibly do so without risk of error?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: There is no avoidable delay in the publication of these lists. They are telegraphed from abroad as soon as the information can be collected after an action, and they are published at home directly the names and numbers can be verified. This process takes longer in the case of men than of officers, as the verification of the former has to be made from the pay lists of the regiments, where there are often several soldiers of the same name. In the case of officers, *The Army List* at once settles any question of identity.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—WATER SUPPLY—PIPES AND PUMPS.

Colonel STANLEY (for Mr. W. H. Smith) asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is the fact that an experimental pipe-water service was laid down at Aldershot last year and tested, in order to ascertain the feasibility of supplying water by pumps from Suakin on the road to Berber; that the pipes and pumps were supplied by English makers, and that the experiment was entirely satisfactory; but that no opportunity was afforded to those manufacturers to tender for or to supply the pumps which are required for the water supply from Suakin, and that without calling for any tenders in England the pumps have been ordered from New York?

Mr. BRAND (who replied) said: Experiments on a small scale were made at Aldershot with apparatus made by English makers, but supplied by Mr. Tweddle, an American gentleman, who has had great and recent experience on petroleum lines. The trial proved successful, and resulted in Mr. Tweddle being intrusted with the supply of pipes and pumps for the first 50 miles. The pipes have been obtained in England; but Mr. Tweddle preferred to operate with pumps from New York, which had the additional advantage of being ready to hand. It has already been stated that it is not contemplated by the War Office to use American apparatus for other sections. As this question has attracted considerable attention, I may, perhaps, be allowed to add that at the time engines of a similar class were working on this identical system in America, and I thought it desirable to purchase one of these engines in order to secure a pattern.

Mr. J. LOWTHER asked whether it was the case that no pumps or engines of that character were to be obtained in England?

Mr. BRAND said, the Government were aware these pumps existed in New York, and had been used by New York gentlemen, and Mr. Tweddle certified that they would answer the purpose for which they were required. Under the circumstances, the Government considered it the best plan to purchase engines that had been used in New York.

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, the hon. Gentleman had not answered the Question. It was not whether the engines were known to exist in America; but whether the Department thought they could not be got in England?

Mr. BRAND said, that although considerable interest attached to the experiments at Aldershot, which were described in the public Press at the time, the Government were never informed by any English manufacturers that they had the particular pumps wanted in their possession. It was the intention of the War Office, having got the pattern, to employ English manufacturers in future.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL asked whether all the pipes to be employed were to be purchased in England?

Mr. BRAND: Yes.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MARTINI HENRYS FOR THE YEOMANRY.

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the Secretary of State for War, When there is any prospect of the Yeomanry being armed with the Martini-Henry Carbine instead of the Snider; and, whether there are not a sufficient number in store to enable them to be provided with those arms at once?

Mr. BRAND (who replied) said: There is a fair supply of these carbines in store; but the Secretary of State is not at present prepared to sanction their issue to the Yeomanry.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACT — REPAYMENT OF LOANS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to the Minute which the Treasury have resolved to issue, altering the terms on which loans are to be given for the purposes of the Labourers' Act, What will be the amount of the annual instalment payable, for each of the terms of years to be adopted by the Minute, in respect of each £100 borrowed?

MR. HIBBERT: The annuity for 35 years would be £4 16*s*. 2*d*. or thereabouts; for 40 years £4 13*s*. 4*d*.; and for 45 years £4 12*s*. 5*d*.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—MURDER OF FRANCIS HUGHES, KEADY, CO. ARMAGH.

MR. DEASY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is intended that the three Orangemen charged with the murder of Francis Hughes, a Catholic, within a few perches of the Orange Hall at Keady, county Armagh, shall be tried at the assizes of Armagh, in which county the jury panel is very largely composed of members of the Orange Society; and, whether it is intended to change the venue so as to ensure an impartial trial?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER): The Attorney General for Ireland has this matter under consideration at present.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND) — CASE OF THOMAS LYDON.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Were charges of drunkenness and assault brought against the Recess police by Thomas Lydon on the 31st October 1884; why was not a sworn inquiry granted, as demanded, and were the charges forwarded; did the police at Recess then bring two charges against Thomas Lydon, and were the cases dismissed; did the police then bring a charge against Thomas Lydon in connection with illicit whiskey, and was it dismissed on the merits; did the police appeal in the latter case, and did the Recorder of Galway attribute partiality to the Bench who dismissed the case, consisting as it did of two resident magistrates; was Lydon then convicted; and, will the Government obtain from the resident magistrates their opinion on the case, and consider the advisability of remitting the fine?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This Question, which obviously involves local inquiries in the West of Ireland, only appeared on the Paper to-day; and I must ask the hon. Member to be good enough to postpone it until Thursday next.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—CONSTITUTION OF THE BOARD.

MR. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Honourable Charles Bourke is to continue Chairman of the Irish Prisons Board; whether it is the fact that Captain Barlow and Sir John Lentaigne are to retire; and, whether it is intended that an English medical man is to go to Ireland periodically to report on Irish prisons?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. Bourke will retain the office of Chairman of the Prisons Board. Captain Barlow is about to retire; but Sir John Lentaigne will continue, as at present, an unpaid member of the Board. It is not the intention of the Irish Government to employ an English medical man, as suggested in the Question. Dr. M'Cabe, at present an Inspector under the Local Government Board, will be appointed medical officer to the Prisons Board.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (SCOTLAND)—SCOTCH FISHERIES COMMISSIONERS.

MR. MUNRO-FERGUSON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of the recommendations on the subject of fisheries made in the Report of the Crofters Commission, it is intended by the Government to take any action on that branch of the Report; and, whether those localities named by the Commissioners as requiring piers or harbours will be inspected by official engineers, in order that they may report on the practicability of giving effect to those recommendations?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: This is a matter which will have to be considered in connection with the Report of the Piers and Harbours Committee for Scotland. The suggestion of my hon.

Friend, that the other places referred to in the Report should be officially examined, I think well deserves consideration.

EGYPT AND THE SULTAN—SPEECH OF PRINCE BISMARCK IN THE REICHSTAG.

MR ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the important statements made by Prince Bismarck in the German Reichstag on Monday, and especially to the following passage:—

"Being further asked whether I would not give my opinion as to what might be done, I said, If I were an English Minister I would not advise the annexation of Egypt, but, at the same time, I admitted that it was necessary for England to establish a certain security of position in this connecting link between her European and her Asiatic possessions. In my opinion, however, I said, she could only gain this position through the Sultan, and thus avoid coming into contact with Treaties. Therefore, said I, if I were an English Minister, I would seek the mediation of the Sultan, in order through him to obtain a position in Egypt by means of which English interests would be safeguarded."

and, whether, in order to safeguard the vital interests of England in Egypt, Her Majesty's Ministers will adopt this counsel?

MR. GLADSTONE: Perhaps I am entirely behind the world in not having seen the text of the speech of Prince Bismarck. With regard to the suggestion in the Question, I may say that at all times in the regulation of our proceedings in Egypt—under circumstances of great difficulty—we have been very desirous indeed, and continue very desirous, to recognize the rights of the Sultan. That is the principle on which we proceed; but as to the application of it, of course I reserve a discretion on behalf of the Government according to circumstances.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ORDER OF BUSINESS.

SIR FARDLEY WILMOT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he will afford him facilities for bringing on his Motion for a Select Committee on Irish Manufacturing and Productive Industries, now standing on the Paper for Tuesday 10th March, and the appointment of which was promised by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in the Autumn Session, when the matter was fully discussed in debate?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am unable to give any facilities to the hon. Member until after the Parliamentary Elections Redistribution Bill has passed. I am not aware that at the present moment there is any very particular necessity for departing from the usual course in order to give the hon. Member an opportunity of testing the opinions of the House upon the Motion he has obtained. He will have, doubtless, opportunities of availing himself of the facilities given him by the Ballot. I perfectly understand the feeling of the hon. Member on the subject, and shall be happy to see what can be more particularly done should he address me a Question on the subject later on. What we propose on Monday is to begin with the Supplemental Army Estimates in Supply. The remainder of the Civil Service Estimates will be taken after the Army Estimates, if time permits; but, at any rate, we shall not continue Supply beyond 11 o'clock, in order that we may then bring on the Motion of the Under Secretary of State for India with respect to the Indian troops.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I should like to understand whether the Vote of Credit will be brought on before the Budget. Another Question I might ask is, when we may expect the communication with regard to the arrangements for the final administration of Egypt?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think it may be taken for granted that the Vote of Credit will be taken before the Budget; but I do not think it is likely either of them will be taken before Easter, owing to the great pressure upon the time of the House. I am not able to name a day when the arrangements in regard to Egyptian finance will be before the House. I am bound to say that the House and right hon. Gentlemen opposite who put Questions on the subject at a very early date have exercised very great patience. I make that admission freely; and I certainly had not the smallest expectation at the end of November, when Questions were put on the subject, that so long a time would be occupied in the settlement. The House is aware that we are dependent upon others, whom we have no right to call to account by reason of the despatch

or slowness of their proceedings; but I feel confident that when Papers are submitted to the House they will show that there has been no slackness or delay on the part of the Government. However, if the delay should continue much longer, I must admit it may become a question whether we should not depart from the usual rule, and produce Papers even without the consent of others concerned.

MR. COURTNEY asked if the Supplementary Estimates were to be the first Order on Monday, which included a sum of about £100,000 for the proposed railway? He would like to know whether they would have by Monday morning the promised Papers for the Suakin-Berber Railway?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he could not tell whether Papers would be in the hands of Members before Monday; but he would see whether it could be done. He was not aware that any Paper had been promised, except that containing the arrangement entered into with Messrs. Lucas and Aird.

MR. COURTNEY inquired whether the Supplementary Votes with respect to the railway works would be postponed, if the Papers were not produced on Monday?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he thought the sums required for the construction of the railway were included in the Supplementary Estimates, and he did not think it would be possible to separate them.

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS (IRELAND) —REPORTS OF THE BOUNDARY COMMISSIONERS.

MR. SMALL asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, in view of the manner in which the Boundary Commissioners in Ireland have divided several counties by townlands, not adhering to either barony or parish boundaries, and of the great dissatisfaction occasioned thereby, and also in view of the very small scale on which the maps inserted in the Report have been drawn, he can see his way to furnish Members with maps of the contentious counties in Ireland on the scale of six inches to the mile, reproduced from the townland ordnance maps, showing thereon the proposed divisional boundaries?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I am not aware that there is any great dissatisfaction occasioned by the adoption of townlands as the unit for division, where it was necessary to do so for the purpose of equalizing the population. The townland is a well-known area, and does not, like parishes, overlap either counties or baronies. The scale adopted for the maps is the same as that adopted for both England and Scotland. The size of the 6-inch maps altogether precludes their being furnished to Members, as suggested. For example, the townland map of Donegal is about 36 feet square, and that of Antrim 30 feet by 24 feet. In fact, the maps would be 24 times the size of those in the Report.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—OBSERVANCE OF THE RULES OF CIVILIZED WARFARE.

In reply to Colonel NOLAN,

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, the responsibility of bringing about an observance of the rules of civilized warfare in the Soudan must be left to the General commanding, who would surely use all efforts to secure such observance.

THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON TRAWLING—THE REPORT.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he could explain how it was that the Report of the Royal Commission on Trawling was in *The Times* on Wednesday, and all the Scottish papers yesterday, and had not yet been delivered to the Members of this House; and, whether the blame rested on the printer at the Home Office?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he must inform his hon. and gallant Friend that there was no printer at the Home Office. When Reports of Commissions were presented, they were printed under the direction of this House. If his hon. and gallant Friend had given him a day's Notice, he would have inquired into the matter; but he would now ascertain for him what had happened in regard to this Report.

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS (SCOTLAND)—BOROUGHS AND BURGHS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Before we go into Committee on the Parliamen-

tary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, I should like to ask the right hon. Baronet who is in charge of the Bill, the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he could not arrange a conference of English and Scotch Members with the view of some compromise in the spelling of the word "borough," so as to avoid, in connection with Bills applying to the whole of the United Kingdom, the shocking mispronunciation of the word "burgh" as applied to Scotch burghs by Members of this House?

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS REDISTRIBUTION) (*re-committed*) BILL.

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

[BILL 49.] COMMITTEE.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.] [FOURTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Main Question (3rd March), "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" for Committee on the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill.

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed*.

MR. PARNELL: I cannot allow this stage of the Bill to be taken without expressing the strongest protest in my power against the deliberate system of jerrymandering which the Boundaries Commission in Ireland has been guilty of with regard to certain of the Ulster counties, and also with regard to the City and County of Dublin. I confess that I was very much disappointed at the nature of the action taken by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke). I expected from the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) the partizan defence which he made the other day of the proceedings of the Boundary Commission. Demoralized as the right hon. Gentleman must have been, more or less, by his contact with Dublin Castle officials, nothing else could have been expected than that he, a leading Radical in England, the exponent for many years of the rights of the people to self-government and to full representation, should have changed his skin when he went over to Ireland, and should have become there a Tory of the Tories. But from the President of the Local Government Board certainly I expected better things. I did not expect that he would have devoted his great and distinguished talents to a special pleading defence of the proceedings of the Irish Boundaries Commission; and I should have hoped that he would have contented himself with pointing out the necessities of the case and of his position; the fact that a compromise had been arrived at between the Head of the Government and the Leader of the Opposition; and that the Government were, therefore, bound by the details settled by the Commission, imperfect and unfair and one-sided as many of those details undoubtedly are to the Catholic population of the North of Ireland. We complain of the jerrymandering of certain counties in the North, because it was impossible for the Commission to act unfairly with any constituencies, except the City and County of Dublin, outside Ulster; and because we do not complain of the proceedings of the Commission outside the Province of Ulster, the Government are not entitled to claim from us any gratitude or appreciation of the proceedings of that Commission. Wherever in an Ulster county it was possible for them by any device, no matter how barefaced, to obtain for the English Party—I call them the English Party in Ireland, because I think that more correctly designates them than the title of the "loyal minority," which they have assumed—a seat, though the Catholic population was in an overwhelming majority, as in Donegal, they did so. Wherever it was possible, on the other hand, for them to deprive the Catholics of a seat where they were the small part of the population, they did so. They were not guided by the precedents which they set up for themselves—they went upon one rule in one county, when it suited the English Party, and they followed an exactly contrary rule in other counties. In fact, the Irish Boundaries Commission only too well fulfilled the prediction which the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board ventured upon at the close of last Session, when he said that it was impossible to find men free from political bias for the services in question. The Irish Boundary Commissioners have shown themselves entirely regardless of that spirit of fair play which has, so far

as I am able to learn, distinguished the proceedings of their brothers in England. How is the North of Ireland situated with regard to the division of political Parties? The Catholics of the Province of Ulster number close upon one-half of the entire population. There was only a difference of 2 or 3 per cent in the respective boroughs of Catholics and Protestants. Allowing, for the sake of argument—although I shall not allow it any further—that the English Party—the Whigs and Tories—can claim all the Protestants in Ireland as belonging to their fold, and we claim, as we undoubtedly can do—all the Catholics as belonging to us, the representation of Ulster should have been very nearly evenly distributed between the two English Parties on one side, and the Irish Party on the other. What has been the result? Out of 33 Members the English Parties will take something like 23, leaving only 10 to the Catholics. Now, it is manifest upon the face of it that such a scheme as that cannot be fair to the Catholics of the North of Ireland; and a very noteworthy fact is that in the only Province where it was possible for them to act unfairly the Commissioners have made the largest number of alterations—in fact, made all the alterations which have been made, with the exception of those made in the City and County of Dublin. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) disputed the accuracy of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy's) figures as to the number of alterations, and said that the number of alterations outside Ulster was larger than that given by my hon. and learned Friend. But the right hon. Gentleman forgot, in his anxiety to defend a weak case, to inform the House that the alterations outside Ulster were merely nominal, and in some cases involved only the change of name. In Mayo the Island of Achill was added to one division instead of the other. Inside Ulster every alteration made had an effect upon the balance of political Parties. It was scarcely candid of the right hon. Gentleman to make a point of so technical a character, and to put forward merely technical alterations as evidence of the inaccuracy of my hon. and learned Friend's statement. That statement was perfectly accurate, so far as the arguments of the Nationalist Party are concerned. Seven alterations were made in Ulster, of which six were in favour of the English Parties, and one partially in our favour. In the three other Provinces there are 70 Members; whereas in Ulster there are only 33. But in those three Provinces there were only two alterations of any account, and those had reference to the City and County of Dublin. These two constituencies are the only constituencies outside Ulster where it was possible for the Commissioners, by deviating from the original scheme, to punish us and serve their friends. The bias of these Commissioners has been rendered very evident by the details which have been given by my hon. Friends the Members for Sligo and Monaghan (Mr. Sexton and Mr. Healy). I cannot think that the Commissioners could have taken it upon themselves to act as they have done, unless they got a hint from some higher quarter. We have the fact of the published letter of the Marquess of Salisbury, who, being in a position of greater freedom and less responsibility than any Member of the Government, did not think it necessary to cloak his views in any way; and he wrote, after the publication of the original scheme of the Boundary Commission with regard to Ulster, to his discontented Conservative friends that the future position of what he called the "loyal minority in Ulster" would depend very much upon the spirit in which the Boundaries Commissioners approached their work. I do not think that the Boundaries Commissioners would have felt themselves bound to regard the hint from the Marquess of Salisbury; and I shall believe, until the contrary is shown, that they would not have ventured upon such daring and one-sided action as has been theirs without a hint from some high quarter or personage in Ireland that the Government would stand by and defend their action, as, in fact, it has been defended by the President of the Local Government Board and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. I do not wish to go into the details of the jerrymandering in the North of Ireland, which have been sufficiently explained by my hon. Friends; but I will give one or two salient facts with regard to each county which will show the direction and the nature and extent of this jerrymandering. Take, for instance, the County Antrim. We had lately a very interesting debate on the representation of minorities, and the position of the

"loyal minority" in Ireland was brought forward as a forcible argument on behalf of the scheme which was proposed in favour of proportional representation, at all events, in Ireland; and I am convinced that under the very best and most favourable system of proportional representation which could be devised you would not secure for the English Parties in Ireland so large a representation as has been secured for them by the proportional system of the Boundaries Commission. What will the House say to the County Antrim, entitled, under the redistribution scheme, to four Members? In Antrim a population of 50,000 Catholics will not have a single Member to represent them. Has the Catholic minority in the county of Antrim no claim for consideration upon the lines which have been adopted? Take, again, the county of Armagh. Forty-seven per cent of the population of Armagh are Catholics, and all the Catholics have been put into one division, so as to make it absolutely certain, so far as the Boundaries Commission could make it, that out of the three seats to be allotted only one should be Catholic. Take the case of the county of Tyrone, entitled under the scheme to four Members. One parish, containing 21 Protestant townlands, has been taken out of one barony and added to another, so as to secure that the Protestants of Tyrone should have representation; although in the case of the County Antrim, where there were 50,000 Catholics, the Commissioners, with equal care and solicitude, contrived that for them there should be no representation whatever. Take the case of the county of Londonderry, entitled to two Members. Well, there has been gross unfairness. The Solicitor General for Ireland, at the preliminary inquiry which was held after the publication of the scheme, objected by counsel to the divisions; and it has been contrived in such a way that, although there are 47 per cent of Catholics in Londonderry, they shall not have the slightest chance of gaining one of the seats; indeed, the divisions, as shown on the map issued by the Boundaries Commission, are a curiosity in themselves for those who are anxious to study geography. By the original scheme the Catholics were massed in one of the divisions; but in order to secure that both seats in the county of Londonderry shall go to the English Parties, the Catholics have been taken away from the Catholic division, and Protestants taken away from the Protestant division of Coleraine barony and added to the Catholic division, so as to make matters sufficiently sure. In the original scheme of the Commissioners, for the county of Londonderry there were 37,000 Catholics in the Catholic division, the total population of which consisted of 70,000. It was manifest that if the division were left so that 37,000 Catholics would outnumber the 33,000 Protestants, it would carry one of the divisions for the Irish National Party. Therefore 3,000 Catholics were taken away and transferred to the Protestant division; and a certain number of Protestants were taken from the Protestant division and transferred to the Catholic division, so as to make things absolutely and entirely safe. Fancy the Whigs and Tories dividing the county between them as the result of a combination which we have heard of recently! The case of Donegal is the exact converse of what occurred in Antrim. Donegal is almost exclusively Catholic, and the same tactics have been adopted as in the other counties I have mentioned. There are 85 per cent of Catholics in the county of Donegal. [Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Seventy-five per cent.] I am willing to accept the noble Lord's figures. The correction of the noble Lord leaves the case of Donegal practically untouched as regards the relative proportions of the two Parties. The fact remains that whereas in the case of Antrim, where a fourth of the population are Catholics, the Commissioners managed that they should have no representation, in the case of Donegal, where a quarter of the population are Protestants, of all sects, the Commissioners have contrived so to jerrymander the boundaries that they shall have a Conservative Representative. In doing so, they have forgotten the principle which the President of the Local Government Board insisted upon as his defence in reference to the County Down, when he said it would not have been right for the Commissioners to cross a lake a mile wide. In the case of Donegal, in order to jerrymander, they have crossed Lough Swilly, which is 20 miles wide. With regard to the county of Dublin, any one who looks at a map will see that they have run in and out and roundabout in a most extraordinary

way, so as to give the Protestant or the English Party a good chance of securing one of the seats to which they are not entitled. In regard to the City of Dublin they have acted still more unfairly. In the Bill the boundaries of the City of Belfast are extended so as to increase the population very materially, and to give to Belfast four Members, the present number being only two. The boundaries are extended in the case of Belfast, in accordance with the Report of the Hexham Royal Commission, which recommends that the boundaries shall be exteded for municipal purposes. That Hexham Commission also investigated the case of Dublin, where a similar extension of boundaries was sought for municipal purposes. The extension of the boundaries for Parliamentary purposes, following the example of Belfast, was pressed upon the Government and upon the Commissioners; but it was refused. If the Parliamentary boundaries had been extended in the case of Dublin, the city would have been given six Members instead of four. On the basis of the Report of the Commission referred to, Dublin is entitled to an extension of boundaries similar to that which has been given to Belfast. I fail to see any satisfactory reason why Dublin should be denied the proper extension which has been conceded in the case of Belfast. The Commissioners have not been content to deny to Dublin the extension given to Belfast, but they have materially departed from the original scheme; they have broken up the wards; they have crossed the river; and they have committed the most extraordinary freaks, so as to secure that parts of the city where there is a very slight majority of the Nationalist Party shall be leavened by an infusion of electors belonging to the English Party. They have also taken away from some parts of the city a portion of the Nationalist strength, and thrown it over to quarters where there is a considerable proportion of electors belonging to the English Party. The cases of Ulster and of the City and the County of Dublin are the only instances in which it was possible for the Boundary Commissioners to treat the Catholics and the Nationalist Party unfairly, and they have done their best to prove once more that it is impossible for an English Government in Ireland to act with fair play to the majority of the people. Some better treatment is due from the Government to the Catholics of Ulster. Those people are the descendants of a sorely oppressed race. They are the survivors of a deliberate attempt to exterminate, by the plantation of Ulster, the Catholics of the North; and if they have increased and mutiplied there again it is a striking tribute to the vitality of the Celtic race. Notwithstanding all the efforts made to diminish their numbers, the Catholics of Ulster are now almost equal with the Protestant population of the district. They have survived persecution and triumphed over unjust laws. That which has been done by the Boundary Commissioners will be remembered by the Catholics of Ulster in the near future, when they join hands with the rest of their countrymen throughout Ireland in the impending struggle for the Constitutional vindication of their rights, a struggle which I hope will be the last. This population is entitled, in all the circumstances of the case, to better treatment than they have received. It is all very well to talk about the necessities of representing English Parties; the so-called loyal minority in Ireland will have been abundantly represented. And it does not deserve exceptional treatment at the hands of Parliament. The loyal minority, as they call themselves, have done more to perpetuate disaffection and embarrass and endanger the Empire than every Fenian agitator from New York to San Francisco. England placed them in Ireland in days gone by as the English garrison, and well have they served their patrons. The garrison so persecuted and so exterminated the people that England was compelled to manacle and hinder them by special legislation, and was compelled to send over and maintain in Ireland vast garrisons of armed men for their protection. At the present moment they had 33,000 valuable soldiers in Ireland for the sake of its so-called "loyal minority;" and would the loyal minority go to Egypt for England and fight the battles there? Would it go to India and protect England from Russian encroachments on the Afghan Frontier? Oh, no; that did not enter into the calculations of these men. No doubt there have been, and there are still, brave men amongst them; but, on the whole, they have shown themselves to be a selfish and an inconsiderate race, mindful only of

their own ends, and little regarding the interests of the Empire. The Catholics of Ulster have been practically deprived of representation in Parliament. Until my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) was returned there was no Catholic Member for the real Ulster Province. It is not fair that the Catholics of Ireland should be treated as they are. I trust that the able way in which our case has been presented by my hon. Friends the Members for Monaghan and Sligo (Mr. Healy and Mr. Sexton) will have an effect upon the conscience and mind of the House, and that it will be able to remedy the injustice that has been done us when the Bill gets into Committee.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, the hon. Member for the City of Cork had used strong language; but he was not in the House on Wednesday afternoon, when his case was stated by the hon. Members for Monaghan and Sligo (Mr. Healy and Mr. Sexton), and he did not hear the reply of the President of the Local Government Board to those two hon. Members. He had now spoken with great force; but he had not added a single fact to those brought before the House on Wednesday, nor was it possible to add much to the reply which had been already given. What was the charge they had made against the Boundary Commissioners of Ireland? They alleged, in the first place, that Earl Spencer gave hints to the Commissioners contrary to the instructions given to them publicly; and that, in pursuance of those hints, the Commissioners had dealt with the question unfairly, and had jerrymandered the districts in Ulster for the benefit of the Loyal Party, and against the interests of the Nationalist Party. Anyone who knew Earl Spencer—and, indeed, any right-minded man—would say at once that it was impossible that he could have acted the part which was attributed to him. It was totally impossible that Earl Spencer could have given to the Commissioners privately hints different from those he gave to them in his commission. It was unnecessary to ask Earl Spencer a question on the subject; but he had received a letter from Mr. Piers White, one of the Commissioners, in which he said—

"The Commissioners never had the slightest communication, directly or indirectly, from Earl Spencer or anyone else in the Irish Government as to the mode in which our duties were to be discharged beyond the public instructions."

He had received similar communications from two other members of the Commission. Everyone who knew the members of the Commission would admit at once that it was totally impossible that they could have acted otherwise than in strict accordance with the public instructions which had been issued, and he hoped they would hear no more on that point. His right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board stated, on Wednesday, that the official schemes of the Commissioners were merely tentative; that they were prepared without any local knowledge of the districts to which they applied; and that they were submitted merely with a view to inquiry.

Mr. HEALY: How was it that they suited the three Southern Provinces?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board explained that in the Southern Provinces the Nationalists were so completely in command of the constituencies that it did not matter which boundary was adopted. That accounted for the fact that the changes were not so numerous in those Provinces as in the Province of Ulster. The hon. Member for the City of Cork had stated that the Commissioners in Ulster had given but one decision in favour of the Nationalist Party. He thought the hon. Member was wrong, and that Down was not the only case. In the case of Armagh objection was taken to the Commissioners' scheme by all parties—Mr. Healy: Nothing of the kind.—and the decision arrived at by the Commissioners was more in favour of the scheme of the Nationalists than that of any other Party. He had gone carefully into these various schemes with the President of the Local Government Board; and he would undertake to say that every one of them might be defended on their merits. When these schemes came to be discussed in Committee, the Government would undertake to prove that in every instance the Commissioners had acted rightly according to the instructions given to them, and they could not be accused of having decided unfairly against the Nationalist Party. He denied that any jerrymandering had taken place in the interests

of the Protestant Party of Ulster. With regard to Donegal all Parties, including the Nationalists, objected to the Commissioners' scheme, and the main objection was, that the two southern baronies had been separated. The Commissioners decided to re-unite the baronies in question in one division, and any independent person who looked at the map could see that the other divisions must follow as a matter of course. The hon. Member for the City of Cork was not correct in stating that Lough Swilly was 20 miles broad; it was not more than four miles across at any part. Looking at the division of Donegal, he contended that it was a legitimate one, and one which thoroughly carried out the instructions of the Commissioners—namely, that the divisions should be compact, and that the pursuits of the people should be considered. The people living on either side of Lough Swilly were fishermen, and most of them spoke the Irish language. Much had been said with regard to the decisions of the Commissioners in the case of Dublin County, which had been divided into two divisions. The Commissioners had in this case followed exactly the same plan as was adopted in England and Scotland, especially in the neighbourhood of London. The hon. Member for the City of Cork complained of the conduct of the Commissioners in not extending the boundary of Dublin while they extended the boundary of Belfast. In the case of Belfast the Bill itself proposed to extend the boundary, adding to the borough those parts which the Municipal Boundaries Commissioners of 1881 recommended should be added, and the Commissioners had somewhat extended those limits. With regard to Dublin it was impossible to extend the boundary without adding places which would practically entitle the city to another Member. It was not within the powers of the Commissioners to extend a boundary so as to entitle a place to an additional Member. The hon. Member for the City of Cork, he believed, complained that the Dublin decisions of the Commissioners would have the effect of giving a seat to the Loyalist Party. That was a conclusion very different to that which had been arrived at from a Loyalist point of view; for he believed it was generally considered by the Conservative Party in Dublin that their hopes of returning a Member had been extinguished. The hon. Member for the City of Cork, however, went on to say that he considered that no process of proportional representation would possibly have given the Loyalist Party so large a representation as they would have under the Commissioners' decision, and that in Ulster alone they would obtain 23 seats, besides two from the University and two from Dublin County, or 27 in all. The Protestants formed one-fourth of the whole population of Ireland; and as they hoped that a not inconsiderable portion of the Catholics might remain, as they probably would remain, among the Loyalists, he thought they might assume that the Party was entitled to one-fourth of the number of Members returned by the country, which would be 26 or 27. He hoped the Loyalist Party would be as well off under the Bill as the hon. Member supposed. While the hon. Member for the City of Cork had, probably, taken an exaggerated view of the case, he did not himself take so gloomy a view as some hon. Members opposite above the Gangway. Taking Ireland throughout, and considering that it would be divided into one-Member districts, the Loyalists would secure a fair, though, perhaps, not the full, representation as they were entitled to. There were three counties in Ulster—Donegal, Cavan, and Monaghan—in which the Catholics formed no less than 74 per cent of the population; and if these three counties were taken away, the Protestants formed a considerable majority in the remaining six counties of Ulster. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan did not take exactly the same view of the number of Members the Loyalists would be able to return. The hon. and learned Member put the number at 23, including the two University Members. Again, he said that was short of the number to which the Protestant Party were entitled by their numbers. [Mr. HEALY: I never said the Protestant Party.] Well, the Loyalist Party. The hon. Member for the City of Cork argued as if the Protestant and Loyalist Party were alike. [Mr. PARNELL: The English Party.] The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan stated the other day that, in his view, the proposal of the Government with regard to the number of Members

given to Ireland was just and fair. It did not appear that the hon. and learned Member and his Friends were acting in the same spirit of fairness towards the Loyalist and English Party in Ireland, for their claim was that the 23 Members of the Loyalist Party should be reduced to something like 16 or 17. He did not think that the House would alter the scheme in the direction in which the hon. Member for the City of Cork pointed. There was no change which could be made in that way which would not be open to the charge made against the Commissioners of jerrymandering in the interests of a Party.

MR. PLUNKET said, he had thought that that evening the House would have proceeded calmly with the consideration of the Bill in Committee; but the hon. Member for the City of Cork Mr. Parnell had chosen, for purposes of his own, to make a most violent and unprovoked attack on what he truly called the Loyalist minority in Ireland. This debate had been prolonged in order that the hon. Member for Cork might make that speech—a speech the obvious purpose of which was to prejudice and intercept the discussion of those matters of detail which must turn up by-and-by in Committee, and to produce, by anticipation, upon the House the impression that he and his Friends had been treated with the greatest harshness and oppression in the matter of the Franchise and Redistribution Bills. The hon. Member seemed to think that his Party were entitled to the deepest consideration and gratitude of the Members representing England, Scotland, and Wales, and that the Loyalists were entitled to nothing but the severest treatment that could be heaped upon them by way of revenge. It would be impossible to discuss the former question in detail on this occasion; he would only say in general that he could confirm, as far as his information went, the views put forward by the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken. He was assured by his friends, who were well acquainted with Ulster, that, so far from getting any advantage, they were placed at the greatest possible disadvantage by the course taken during the last few weeks; and with regard to the County and City of Dublin, with which he was intimately acquainted, he could speak from his own knowledge. But as to the latter part of his speech he must say that the statement of the hon. Member for the City of Cork exceeded, in perfect *sang froid* and audacity, anything he had ever heard even from that hon. Gentleman before. The Party which the hon. Member called the English Party was as decidedly an Irish Party as that of the hon. Member himself; but they happened to be the loyal Irish Party. It was not possible to draw the line of the loyal faction and the Separatist Party conterminous with the lines of Protestant and Catholic Ireland; for whilst there could not be found in all Ireland, he believed, 100 or 200 Protestants who were in favour of separation, there were multitudes of men of the Roman Catholic religion who were as loyal as any others. Outside of Ulster there were 300,000 and odd Protestants; and, according to the views of the hon. Member, they had no right even to one seat for Dublin. Why, they were entitled to five or six seats instead of one. And that was the great grievance that the hon. Member brought forward, and the great complaint he made against the action of the Commissioners. He Mr. Plunket did not desire to dwell further on this point; but they knew that, while the Protestants were one-fourth of the population of Ireland, and the whole Loyalist population was certainly one-third, if they took the well-to-do Catholics, who were Loyalists almost to a man, they were not going to get anything like a proportion of Members to which they were entitled, even according to their numbers, under this redistribution scheme. What, however, he wished more particularly to call attention to was another part of the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, which was as gratuitous and unjust a reproach as was ever directed against the Loyalist minority in Ireland. Would it be believed that the hon. Member appealed to the Members for England, Wales, and Scotland, for more favourable treatment of the Nationalists, on the ground that they were entitled to the gratitude of the Members in question and their fellow-countrymen, while the Loyal or English Party in Ireland were not entitled to any gratitude at all? The hon. Member asked—"What have the Loyalists, what have the Protestants ever done for you? What has Ulster done? Think of

all the troops that are sent to protect Protestantism in Ireland. Have any of them ever gone to fight your battles? Have any of them spilled their blood for you?" In face of the facts, such language was presuming on the supposed ignorance of the audience to whom it was addressed. What were the facts? He did not believe that there were now more than two regiments in all Ulster; and the Army in Ireland was not there to protect the men of Ulster, who were well able to take care of themselves, but to protect loyal people who were scattered throughout the rest of the country. And as to volunteering, he was glad to know, as a fact, that one Militia regiment in the North of Ireland had already volunteered to go out and take part in the war in Egypt. Who were those whose lives had been sacrificed in the Soudan? What were the names connected with their struggles and difficulties there?

MR. HEALY: Officers or privates?

MR. PLUNKET: Privates as well as officers. Of the 11 officers who fell at Abu Klea, five or seven, he did not know which, were Irishmen. Stewart and Wolseley — were not these Irish names? Gough, Darley, and the others —did they not know them well? And did not the hon. Member know that it was an Irish regiment which was foremost when a prize was offered for the first which arrived at the place of danger? What right had the hon. Member for the City of Cork to claim gratitude for his friends in Ireland at the expense of those whom he called the English faction? Was not Power, the companion of Stewart, a Celt, if there was one? Yet at this time, when his fellow-countrymen, Catholic and Celtic, as well as Protestant, were exposed every day to deadly peril, when Irishmen were daily adding new lustre to the Irish name, the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his Friends, at every meeting of their followers, were calling out for cheers for the Mahdi.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he did not know where the occasion came from for all this indignation on the part of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Plunket), except upon the assumption that he had been touched by the spear of truth, and smarted under it. It was the fact, and there was no use denying it, that the gentlemen who called themselves the loyal minority in Ireland had taken the main part in making the country ungovernable by England. The loyal minority had been petted, pampered, and indulged by successive Governments, to the detriment of the majority. How long would they be loyal if they received the treatment which was dealt out to the majority of the Irish people? How long would they be loyal if they had to submit to confiscation and religious persecution? Their loyalty was conditional upon their remaining lords and masters in Ireland, under the protection of the strong arm of England. Which was it better for England, that there should be a loyal minority or a loyal majority in Ireland? He could tell the House that there would never be a loyal majority in Ireland until those who were known as the loyal minority were brought to their senses. Arguments were urged there about the necessity of fully representing the loyal minority; but he would say what about the 2,000,000 Roman Catholics in England—what representation were they to get? The game of the so-called loyal minority had been played by the Boundary Commissioners, who had tricked the Nationalist majority. Their first schemes were impartial, because they were drawn up in London without local knowledge; but when they went to the North of Ireland, and learnt the views of the Tories, the Commissioners at once accepted the suggestions of the Emergency men and the Orange Party.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE said, he wished to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill to a matter brought before the House on Wednesday by the hon. Member for Roxburghshire and the hon. Member for Edinburgh. What was said in the debate on Wednesday by the Chancellor of the Duchy had created great uneasiness amongst the Scotch Members. It seemed to indicate on the part of the Government their intention to give no effect to the proposals which the Lord Advocate submitted to the Scotch Members. These Members felt very grateful to the Lord Advocate for the pains which he had taken in preparing the scheme for the re-grouping of the Scottish burghs. They had devoted two whole days to the discussion of the scheme; and although there were some points on which difference of opinion arose, yet the scheme, as a whole, was very generally ap-

proved of. In those circumstances the Scotch Members thought it very strange indeed that the Government should desire to depart wholly from the proposed arrangements. Sir Charles W. Dilke: No, no!] Well, he was very glad to know it was not the intention of the Government to do so; but that was certainly the impression produced on Wednesday. The Chancellor of the Duchy said the proposals were so connected together as to form a kind of puzzle, and if one piece fell out the whole scheme dropped to pieces. The right hon. Gentleman surely could not have read the proposals of the Lord Advocate——

Mr. TREVELYAN explained that what he did say was that some of the proposals would involve the fate of others; and he endeavoured to justify that by pointing out that it would be extremely difficult to take one part of the plan and leave the other parts.

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE thought that was exactly what he had said.

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he was referring to some of the proposals.

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE said, he was happy to have had the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman, and to be assured that the impression produced on his mind and the minds of many Scotch Members was an erroneous one, and that the Government really saw their way to carry out some of the proposals. There were several of those proposals as to which the opinion of the Scotch Members was all but unanimous, and there could be no difficulty in carrying these out. There were others which involved debatable questions, and he could understand there would be some difficulty in giving effect to these; but that was no reason for setting aside others that were simple. He trusted, after what was said, that the Government would see their way to put some of the proposals on the Paper shortly. Scotch Members had been expecting to see them on the Paper; and he knew the intention of many of these Members was, that if the Government did not put them down they would themselves do so on their own account, in order that they might be discussed by the Committee. He trusted, however, to see them down on the Paper to-morrow.

Mr. BERESFORD said, that as some reference had been made to Armagh County, he should like to remark that he was present on the occasion of the visit of the Commissioners. They had their map, and it was found that they had not allowed a sufficient number of inhabitants to No. 2 division of Armagh. They were, in fact, 6,000 short of this, and the discrepancy was so great that, of course, it had to be rectified. There was also a Petition from the inhabitants of Ballymore praying to be included in the Mid-Armagh district, which was duly considered. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had talked of the plantation of Ulster. Well, it was probably owing to that plantation that the hon. Gentleman himself came to be an Irishman. If not, how could he account for the estates of Mr. J. Parnell in County Armagh—which, by the way, was reported to be the most rack-rented property in Ulster.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I rise to Order, Mr. Speaker. Is the hon. Member in Order in going into the ancestry and landed possessions of the hon. Member's Mr. Parnell's family?

Mr. SPEAKER: The remarks of the hon. Member were becoming irrelevant.

Mr. BERESFORD said, of course he bowed to the Speaker's ruling; but, as the hon. Member for the City of Cork had talked about the plantation of Ulster, he (Mr. Beresford) was showing that the hon. Member must originally have come into Ireland in that way. He did not believe there was a drop of Celtic blood in the hon. Member. The hon. Member had also thrown a doubt on the bravery of the men of the North of Ireland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) had sufficiently made answer on that point; and he would only add one name that had been omitted—a name that was a household word in the North of Ireland, and a name which was heard with pride all over the United Kingdom—that of Charlie Beresford. The loyal minority had to complain that instead of being unduly represented they would not be as sufficiently represented as they ought to be in future Parliaments.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour), in reply to his hon. Friend the Member for Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. Dick-Peddie), said there was every desire on the part of the Government to place before the House those portions of the proposals to which he had referred.

and which were found to have had prevalent or very general assent. There were certain parts as to which it was found that that condition did not exist; and, consequently, there were some of the proposals which would not be submitted to the House by the Government, and, as the Chancellor of the Duchy had said, that would also involve, so far, the fate of certain others by a certain measure of re-arrangement. But those portions as to which there had been, and still was, as the Government believed, a general assent would be put on the Paper, and possibly certain modifications made in some of those which were involved more or less in some of those portions which would have to be dropped. That was all that the Government would do. Of course, it would be quite open to any hon. Member to put on the Paper such further additions in the same direction, or in a different direction, as they might think fit, and they would be duly considered.

Mr. RAMSAY thanked the hon. Member (Mr. Dick-Peddie) for bringing forward this matter as to the grouping of the burghs in Scotland, and the re-arrangement which was brought before the conference of Scottish Members. He thought it would have been a very strange thing if the views of the Scottish Members regarding the arrangements for Scotland had failed to be carried out by the Government; because the Scotch Members met for the purpose of considering the schemes that were laid before them, and in the majority of cases they approved of them. What met with general approbation should surely be carried out. For example, in the case of the five burghs that he had the honour to represent, each of them had agreed to the proposition that had been made to dissolve the group, or rather to take the returning burgh Falkirk from the group, and to connect another burgh in Lanarkshire with three other burghs which he at present represented in the county, and to form these four Lanarkshire burghs into a group. He had presented Petitions from the members of the Liberal Association in these burghs in favour of this proposal, and they had the assent also of various Town Councils. Therefore, he was glad that the misapprehension amongst Scotch Members as to what was stated by the Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Trevelyan) should have been removed in this casual way.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND called the attention of the House to the County of Wicklow, which was divided by the Boundaries Commission into East and West Wicklow, whereas it would be more fairly divided into North and South Wicklow. A great deal had been said about the representation of the "loyal minority" in Ireland. There were 2,000,000 of Catholic Irishmen in England, and they would not be able to return more than one Member to represent them. Except in one division of Liverpool the Catholic Irish minority in England would be unrepresented.

Mr. C. S. PARKER said, he was most unwilling to delay even for a few minutes the Speaker leaving the Chair; but there was a point of principle in regard to redistribution of seats in Scotland which could only properly be discussed, he thought, at the present stage. Generally, he thought, Scotland would not trespass much on the time of the House in Committee, because Scotch arrangements were mostly recent, and did not require much re-adjustment. But one part of their electoral system was of an ancient and archaic character—namely, the groups of burghs, which were wholly unsuited for the present time. The question he wished to raise was, in dealing with these groups of burghs, which they had not to deal with in England or Ireland, how far were they placed under restrictions of principle by the understanding that had been come to by the two Front Benches? These burghs were arranged in the most singular manner. He might illustrate it best by referring to the case of his own own county. The burgh of Kilmarnock, in Ayrshire, having a population of about 26,000, was conjoined with the capital of Renfrewshire, the capital of Dumbartonshire, and one of the largest towns in Lanarkshire. Again, in the same county, the burgh of Ayr was combined with the capital of Argyllshire and with one town in the extreme North and another in the extreme South of Argyllshire. It was generally agreed that such a combination should be broken up; but when they came to re-arrangement, then arose this difficulty of principle. It seemed to be argued on behalf of the Government that in the re-arrangement they were not to include

in a group any burgh which had not at present Parliamentary representation, nor might they add a surrounding district from the county. Then, what remained? A satisfactory arrangement became extremely difficult under such narrow restrictions; and it seemed to him that, the case of Scotland being different from that of England and Ireland, abstract principles which had been arrived at in regard to these two countries should not be applied so rigorously to Scotland. In Ayrshire they had a population which made four quotas, entitling to four Members. They had at present a Member for North Ayrshire, one for South Ayrshire, one for the Kilmarnock, and one for the Ayr Burghs. Surely it seemed a most reasonable arrangement that, in place of distant outlying burghs, they should either give Kilmarnock two or three neighbouring burghs in the county within a few minutes of it by rail, making up a quota, or that they should carve out from the county a district of which Kilmarnock should be the centre. They should deal with the burgh of Ayr in the same way, and in that case they would give to Ayrshire the four Members to which its four quotas entitled it. But if they proceeded otherwise they would have this difficulty. They had a town like Kilmarnock, with a population of 26,000, far above the number that retained representation in England and Ireland, which was a returning burgh, and the Lord Advocate proposed to combine it with Ayr, also a returning burgh, with a population of more than 20,000. If these burghs were of the same character something might be said for this proposal; but Kilmarnock being essentially a manufacturing town, and Ayr being a county town, with agricultural interests connected with it, both the towns objected to that combination, and if an abstract principle were laid down against adding any population not already included in a group, they would be driven to remain under the old-fashioned arrangement This was a point of principle; and he begged to protest against its being considered that the point of principle had been settled on the second reading, or in the course of the present debate. It should be open to them, on the individual cases as they arose, to propose that one or other of these towns, such as Kilmarnock or Ayr, might be conjoined with neighbouring burghs, or with the neighbouring district in its own county.

Major General ALEXANDER said, he wished to make one remark with reference to observations that fell from the hon. Member for Roxburghshire Mr. A. Elliot), who the other day referred to a meeting of Scotch Members, convened by the Lord Advocate, in the Committee Room upstairs, respecting the question of redistribution in Scotland. The hon. Member on that occasion expressed an opinion that the majority of Scotch Members, or, as he went on to say, of Scotch Liberal Members, were in favour of the Lord Advocate's scheme. He regretted that the hon. Member should have made any allusion to Scotch Liberal Members, or that he should have mentioned Liberals at all; because he always considered that a meeting to which the Lord Advocate summoned Scotch Liberal and Conservative Members alike was entirely a non-political meeting. If it was not a non-political meeting, then he thought it would never do to have these meetings at all for the consideration of great Imperial questions. They sat for two days, he might say, *in camerâ*, and none of the proceedings were allowed to transpire; and he therefore regretted that any Member who was present should state what were the views of either the Liberals or Conservatives on the occasion. Another point he wished to refer to was that just alluded to by the hon. Member who had just sat down—namely, the way in which this redistribution scheme would affect the county of Ayr, one division of which he had the honour to represent. He might tell the Prime Minister, whom he saw in his place, that the scheme was not popular even with the Liberals of the county of Ayr; because the leading Liberal organ of the county had, week after week, made strong statements against this redistribution scheme, and it went on to suggest that if the House of Commons would not listen to reason an appeal should be made to the calm judgment of the House of Lords, as they called it. The reason why the Liberals objected to the scheme for the county of Ayr was, because it restricted the representation of Ayrshire, which was considered as too much restricted already. Ayrshire, after Lanarkshire, was the most populous county in Scotland, hav-

ing, at the last Census, a population of 217,000, but now increased to 220,000. Whereas it had now two county Members, and a preponderating influence in returning two burgh Members, it was actually proposed to restrict its representation to two county Members and one burgh Member. It claimed the right to four Members, having a population, as he had said, of 220,000. If they contrasted the treatment which the county of Ayr received with that accorded to the county of Fife, they would see the vast difference between the two, and the justice of what both the Liberals and Conservatives of Ayrshire were saying; because, whereas the county of Fife had a population of only 171,000 at the last Census, it was to have a representation of four Members. That seemed almost inexplicable. But if they went a step further, and took the St. Andrew's group of burghs, which had a population of 19,000 or 20,000, that small and comparatively insignificant group was to retain a Member; while the large burgh of Kilmarnock, which had been from time immemorial a returning burgh, was to be merged for the future in the burghs included in the Ayr group. That had caused great discontent in the burgh of Kilmarnock, and he hoped, at least, that part of the scheme would not be carried out. Then the hon. Member for Fifeshire (Mr. Preston Bruce) said everything did not depend on numbers. Now, he thought it was precisely on that point they were claiming additional Members for Scotland. If they considered the population of Scotland, it was properly entitled to some 12 or 15 additional Members entirely on the ground of population, and he did not understand that these Members were to be given irrespective of population. He would respectfully point out to the Prime Minister and the Government that it was not sufficient to give these additional Members for Scotland; but that it was also the duty of the Government to see that these Members were properly apportioned and distributed.

MR. M'MAHON said, when they came to consider the Bill in Committee he would call attention to the divisions of Dublin City and County. Leaving to one side the political aspect of the case, the divisions made by the Commissioners would be a great inconvenience.

Major General Alexander

Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Preliminary.

Clause 1 (Short title).

SIR JOHN HAY, in moving, as an Amendment, in page 1, line 6, after the word "the," to insert "increase and," said, that if the Amendment were adopted, the Act would be cited as "The Increase and Redistribution of Seats Act." He would point out that all former Bills for the redistribution of seats had been brought forward with the object of redistributing seats which already existed. Some of the 658 seats that were appropriated for the representation of the people had been, on various occasions, removed from decayed or small constituencies and added to larger ones; but the Bill now before the Committee, if it was to be carried out according to the promises and intentions of the Government, would not only redistribute seats, but would add to their number. He spoke as a Scotch Member, and unless, by some means or other, they were assured that the 12 additional Members it was the intention of the Government to give were provided in the Bill, Scotland would certainly not be satisfied. He had suggested an arrangement by which the equalization of the number of Members for different parts of the Kingdom might have been obtained. It had been decided by the House, however, that the number of the Irish and Welsh Representatives should not be diminished in proportion to the numerical representation which obtained in England and Scotland. If the proportion of 45,300, which obtained in Wales, were applied to the other parts of the United Kingdom, England would have 560 Representatives; Scotland, 85; Wales, 30; and Ireland, 105—making a total of 780 Representatives for the House, instead of 670, as proposed by the Government. It was quite evident that the general sense of the House was against any increase in the number of Members, and the Bill itself recited that it was a Bill for the redistribution of seats at Parliamentary Elections. Therefore, in order to make the provisions of the Bill run in conformity with the title of it, it

was necessary, seeing that an increase of 12 Scotch Members was to take place, that the Bill should be cited, not only as a Bill for redistributing seats, but also for increasing the number of seats. He would have preferred infinitely that the equalization should take place in the way he had before suggested; but the House had already decided against the proposal, and he was afraid that when the Committee came to discuss the clause which increased the Scotch representation, the Scotch Members would have very little chance of obtaining what they desired, unless they amended the title of the Bill so as to carry with it the determination that there should be an increase. A little further on the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) had an Amendment on the Paper which provided that the additional Members for Scotland should be obtained by disfranchising existing boroughs. As an old English Member, for he (Sir John Hay) had enjoyed the honour of sitting in the Imperial Parliament for an English constituency, he could not concur with the hon. Member in any proposal to diminish the number of English Members below the number now returned. As he had already pointed out, if the number of Members for Ireland and Wales were continued as at present arranged, the number of English Members ought to be increased to 560. That, however, was a *reductio ad absurdum*, and it was not to be supposed that such a proposition would for one moment be accepted by the House. At the same time, it showed how over represented Ireland and Wales were as compared with England and Scotland; because, if England had 560 Members and Scotland 85, there would only be 13 left for the rest of the Kingdom. He would not detain the Committee by enlarging further upon the Amendment; but he confessed that he should not believe Her Majesty's Government were in earnest in proposing any addition to the numbers of the House, in order to satisfy the just claims of Scotland, unless the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill Sir Charles W. Dilke accepted the Amendment he had now the honour to move.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 6, after the word "the," insert the words "increase and." — (*Sir John Hay*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the right hon. and gallant Baronet opposite (Sir John Hay) appeared to refuse to believe that the Government were in earnest about the increased representation of Scotland unless they inserted his Amendment in the clause. He could assure his right hon. Friend, however, that Scotland would receive the additional Members promised, and that the Bill was not likely to pass unless that part of the programme was complied with. He wished, however, to point out that the Amendment was not necessary in order to secure that object, because the increase of one Member instead of 12 would satisfy it, and it did not in the slightest degree carry out the pledge that 12 additional seats would be given to Scotland. As a matter of fact, it would not necessarily increase the Scotch representation, although it would put the Government in fetters and shackles. The Amendment was quite unnecessary. The number of Members in the House was not fixed by any Constitutional rule, and after the strong declarations which had been made by the Government regarding this subject, he hoped it would be found unnecessary to pursue it further. He might point out that, as a matter of fact, the House at the present moment did not consist of 658 Members, but only of 652, which was really the present number by law, and had been so for some years. It was only a matter of superstition, therefore, to attach so much reverence to the number of 658. Furthermore, the Act of 1868 took away seven seats from England and gave them to Scotland; but there was no allusion to that fact in the recitals of the Act, and he thought they ought to adopt the general rule in Bills of this kind. Even the right hon. and gallant Gentleman himself admitted the necessity of increasing the number of seats for Scotland in some form or other; but the Government, having already made declarations so complete and strong, would only weaken their position by going further.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Clause *agreed to*.

PART I.

REDISTRIBUTION.

Boroughs.

Clause 2 (Boroughs named in First Schedule to become parts of counties or boroughs).

MR. BRYCE, in moving, as an Amendment, in page 1, line 12, after the word "boroughs," to insert the words "and Universities," with the object of securing that, from and after the end of the present Parliament, the Parliamentary boroughs "and Universities" named in the Schedule should cease as boroughs and Universities respectively to return any Member, said, that the duty of asking for the disfranchisement of the Universities was a delicate one, especially when the person undertaking it was himself connected with them. He trusted, however, that the Committee would believe him when he said that he was acting in what he believed to be, rightly or wrongly, the interests of the Universities themselves; and there was no hon. Member in that House who was more filled with sentiments of loyalty, affection, and gratitude towards his University than he was towards those to which he owed his education—the Universities of Glasgow and Oxford. He altogether disclaimed being animated by any other feeling than that of wishing to promote the well-being of the Universities themselves; nor did he wish to rest his case upon the ground that the Parliamentary representation of a University was an anomaly. He saw no harm in anomalies if they were practically useful. If this representation rendered any service either to the University or to the country, let it by all means stand, however great an anomaly it might be. He also disclaimed the idea that any Party motive actuated him in bringing the subject forward. Any slight alteration which the disfranchisement of the nine University seats would make in the existing difference between the two political Parties was of too small a kind to merit much consideration. At the present moment, seven of them were held by Members sitting on the other side of the House, and two by Members sitting on that side. The reason why he moved this Amendment was because he believed it to be for the distinct benefit of the Universities themselves. He would now endeavour to justify that statement. In the first place, the existing system was bad for these seats of learning, because the possession of Parliamentary representation brought Party politics not only into the Universities themselves, but into the academical Governing Bodies of the Universities—the Senate of Cambridge and the Convocation of Oxford. That was a serious evil, because it tended to make parties in a University form themselves upon political lines. Thus it prevented persons from forming as fair and impartial a judgment on educational questions as they would otherwise do, by making them associate themselves with political sections which had nothing to do with education. Not content with introducing political issues, in some cases the evil was carried so far as to run candidates for academical appointments on Party political grounds. This not only produced bad appointments, but affected peace and good feeling within the academic body, and was felt to be so serious a matter at Oxford, that nearly all appointments had now been taken away from Convocation. It was found that the wire-pullers who managed the Parliamentary elections turned to account their knowledge of the registers, and brought up men to vote in case of appointments who were their own political adherents. The result was that appointments had been made with little reference to the merits of the candidates themselves, but solely from political considerations, or to reward political services. In fact, the disfranchisement of the Universities would leave them stronger, more tranquil, more united, and better fitted for their real educational work. But the evil of Parliamentary representation went further, for it positively falsified and misrepresented the wishes of the University itself. The Members who sat in that House as Members for the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge—and it was to these Universities that he chiefly wished to direct attention—were not really Members for the University at all. They knew nothing about the University. He hoped they would pardon him for saying so, but they were the Members for a large number of persons scattered over the country, and not for the true Universities as Teaching Bodies. What was a University? The real University was a number of

teachers, residing in the towns of Cambridge and Oxford, Dublin, and so forth —Heads of Colleges, Professors, Fellows, Tutors, and Lecturers. In the cases of Oxford and Cambridge the number reached about 250. Bodies of men of that kind, though small, were real bodies, possessing a corporate life and existence, each constituting a centre of culture and a distinct social entity, and perhaps worthy of Parliamentary representation. Small as it was, such a constituency would be, at any rate, exceptionally intelligent, and would be different in kind from the other constituencies of the country. But who were the voters of the technical and legal constituency? In the case of Oxford it consisted of 5,382 persons, and in that of Cambridge of 6,458. The persons who actually voted as the technical constituents were gentlemen who, at one time of their lives, between the ages of 17 or 18 and 21, had spent three years at Oxford or Cambridge, who might have devoted little or no attention to their studies while there, and who, after leaving the University, had not kept up, in most cases, their connection with it, seldom or never visiting it, and knowing little or nothing of what was going on there. Few of them took any interest in it, and if they had any tie, it was a tie with their College and not with the University. Nor was it even the fact that all of those who had taken their degree of M.A. had a vote, for the right of voting was confined to those who paid a certain sum per annum to keep their names on the College and University books. Thus the University voters were, to a great extent, men belonging to the wealthier class; and, instead of forming a large body of highly educated men, they mainly consisted of persons not substantially superior to the rest of the upper and middle classes, and by no means those who had most profited by the University or its studies. It was, in fact, a comparatively small section of the graduates who, because they kept their names on the books for the sake of this privilege, enjoyed the right of choosing Members who purported to be Members for the Universities, and, as he had pointed out, it was the richer and not the more cultivated section. How did the privilege come into existence? It was in the year 1603 that James I., by Letters Patent—whose legality was disputed at the time—gave to the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge the right of returning Members. What were the constituencies at that time? They were nominally the same as now, including Doctors and Masters whose names were on the books, but in reality altogether different. In those days the elections were, practically, in the hands of those who were engaged in the active work of the Universities; because the difficulties of communication were so great that it was impossible for graduates to come up from a distance in order to record their votes in Convocation, where the Members were chosen. The constituencies created by King James I. were therefore practically constituencies of persons resident within and actively connected with the University. They were constituencies which had a genuine life and individuality of their own, which, in a certain sense, entitled them to representation. In process of time, when communication became more easy, and especially in the present century, when swift coaches begun to run, and were in their turn superseded by railways, it was rendered quite possible for voters living at long distances, and in different parts of the Kingdom, to come up to Convocation and record their votes. As a consequence, the nature of University representation entirely changed; the power of returning Members fell into the hands of persons who resided away from the University, and who knew little or nothing of its working; and there sprang up conditions wholly different from those under which the representation was originally granted. That state of circumstances continued to go on until the expense of bringing the voters to the poll became so serious that people began to think it would be better to do away with the trouble of bringing them up at all; and about 21 years ago an Act, introduced by the present Lord Monk Bretton, was passed, which substituted a system of voting papers, transmitted by post, for personal voting. Now, under the present system of voting papers, a man might go and live in Cardiganshire, or Northumberland, and never revisit his University for 40 years, and, nevertheless, retain his vote as much as if he were Dean of Christchurch. He hoped this digression would not be useless, if it pointed out to the Committee how entirely altered were the circumstances which originally led to the

establishment of these constituencies. He would now point out the result of the change. The University constituencies had come to be composed of a large number of persons who had little or no practical connection with the Universities at all. The majority of the Oxford and Cambridge University voters were, as was well known, country clergymen. In point of fact, the Members for Oxford and Cambridge of late years had been entirely elected and governed by the clerical interest. He did not make that a ground of accusation, for the country clergy were as well entitled to have second votes as squires or barristers; but he mentioned it as explaining the regrettable fact that the Members for Oxford and Cambridge Universities had, on more than one occasion, been altogether misrepresentative of the opinions of the University residents and the University Teaching Body. Hon. Members would recollect that down to the year 1871 a long struggle was maintained at Oxford and Cambridge for the abolition of the detestable system of religious tests which then existed. The strongest opponents they met in their endeavour to destroy that abominable system, which tormented and degraded the consciences of young men, and excluded Nonconformists from the national seats of learning, were the Representatives of Oxford and Cambridge, because, they maintained, tests represented the clergy. The consequence was that for many years University tests were continued, which nearly all the best men connected with the Universities—all the most energetic and useful teachers—were anxious to see swept away; but which the University Members, at the bidding of the clergy, who formed the bulk of their constituents, were most zealous in supporting. That would show the misuse of their electoral privileges by persons who had no real connection with the Universities. Whenever an election occurred, it was found that the wishes of the residents were opposed and overborne by the majority of the non-residents. There was a case in point, when the present junior Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot) was returned. One of the candidates then brought forward was one of the most eminent scientific men in this country, or, indeed, in Europe. He was a moderate politician—so moderate that some Liberals did not approve of him—but although he had a considerable majority among the residents, and a large majority among those who were engaged in the work of education, out of a constituency of more than 5,000 he did not get 1,000 votes altogether. Hon. Members would recollect that something similar happened not long ago in the case of the University of Cambridge. The junior Member (Mr. Raikes) was returned by a large majority, although his opponent had a majority—not a very considerable one—among the resident voters, and a decided majority among the resident teachers.

Mr. RAIKES said, he might perhaps state that he was not aware what the majority of his opponent was among the resident teachers; but among the residents he had a majority of nine.

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE: They were, as nearly as possible, half and half.

Mr. BRYCE said, that although it was annoying to the residents to find that their official Parliamentary Representatives were always opposed to the educational objects they had in view, he wished to put the case upon the more serious ground that it was an injury to the University herself that the wishes and plans of the Teaching Body—those who were concerned in and responsible for the proper work of the University, educational, scientific, and literary—should be counter-worked by the Parliamentary Representatives of the University, those persons having no knowledge of the concerns of the Teaching University, no special interest in her educational functions, no familiarity even with the arrangements of the Colleges and management of College property, simply because such Members had come more recently from Oxford or Cambridge, and maintained a closer personal connection with members of the Teaching Body. It might be said that they could get all—by inquiry in Oxford or Cambridge—the information that was necessary; but anyone could collect information, and, in fact, many other Members of the House were better informed on subjects relating to the Universities and the work of education carried on by them. Perhaps, in speaking of the interests of the Universities in having special Representatives, he might be allowed to support his arguments by a quotation from Anthony Wood, who said, in his annals

of the history of Oxford, under the year 1603—

"When the King, by his Letters Patent under the Great Seal of England, granted to either of the Universities that they might elect two Burgesses to serve in Parliament, it was then commanded that two grave and learned men professing the Civil Law should be by writ chosen to serve for them as Members of the House of Commons: which grant, though for the present it was accounted a great favour to the Universities as to the prosecuting their affairs in Parliaments, yet since not, as it hath been observed by many. For whereas before most of those Members that had been students in the Universities would stand up as occasion offered on behalf of their respective mothers, now none would do that office, because it is incumbent on two, who commonly are found negligent by following their own affairs or else not able as to their parts or understanding to undergo what their places require."

This judgment of old Anthony Wood was not far from the actual truth now, and it would be far better if the interests of the Universities were left to those who knew of their present condition and practical needs, and not intrusted to the legal guardianship of nominal Representatives. He did not, however, propose that the electoral franchise should be confined to residents, for although this would create real living University constituencies, those constituencies would be open to the objection he had already stated of suffering in their educational work from political Party spirit, and would, moreover, be much too small. In these days of disfranchisement, it was hardly to be expected that the House would call into existence two constituencies, neither of which would exceed 400 electors. Hence, the only course was to disfranchise the Universities altogether; and it must be remembered that the graduates who now had University votes would not suffer entire disfranchisement by losing their University representation, because arrangements had already been made which gave the clergy the right of voting for the boroughs or counties in which they resided, and as regarded others who were not the fortunate possessors of livings, they would be entitled to a vote as lodgers. Every non-resident who now possessed a University vote, was practically certain to have another vote already, and therefore could not be deemed to be damnified by losing his second vote, while as to University residents, it would be easy to give them the right of voting for the boroughs in which the Universities stood. He was quite aware that, as far as he had already gone, he had only endeavoured to show that this apparent privilege was of no benefit, but rather an injury, to the Universities themselves. But he might be told that it was maintained not for the sake of the Universities, but for the sake of the country at large, whose interest it was to have independent constituencies, educated constituencies, constituencies which, at any rate, differed from the ordinary borough and county divisions. He knew perfectly well that that was the feeling which animated many hon. Members who had asked him privately why, being himself connected with a University and not a fanatical democrat, he should desire to bring everything down to the dead level of a dreary democracy. "Why," they said, "do away with variety? We now have a means of getting superior men representing Literature, Art, Science, and Education. The Universities are picturesque, historical, independent. Why not leave us this romantic element to relieve that monotony of equal electoral districts which we are rapidly approaching?" He might be much moved by such an argument if there was anything in the past history of the representation of these Universities to justify the merits claimed for them. But what foundation was there for the claim. As a matter of fact, no constituencies were less independent than the University constituencies. And why was that? It was because they had no local life. These bodies of 5,000 or 6,000 electors were distributed all over the country, under such circumstances that the electors of each party could never possibly meet together for consultation or discussion, and they were, therefore, at the mercy of the agents and wire-pullers of the political Party to which they belonged. Talk of Caucus dictation! There was no constituency in the United Kingdom more absolutely at the mercy of an irresponsible and unrepresentative Caucus than the University of Oxford, none upon which the Carlton Club could more easily impose a Member. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes, that that was so; the experience of the last 20 years proved it. If hon. Members looked at the matter, they would see that it must be so, because the means which existed in the case of other constituences for the electors to

vindicate their freedom of choice, did not exist here. They could only communicate with one another by letter, and when the small knot of wire-pullers, in Oxford or Pall Mall, brought out their candidate and went to work, it was found impossible for independent voters to resist them successfully, as might be the case in a constituency of the ordinary kind. Anybody who knew the history of Oxford and Cambridge Elections for some years, would agree that this was so, and would add that they had been comparatively well treated by the Carlton Club; for, whereas the managers of that Club might have returned whomsoever they liked as Members for the Universities, they had given the Universities Representatives of whose personal characters none would complain. He made no attack on them, but must insist that the four Members who sat for the English Universities did not represent either Education or Literature or Science or Art. They were very estimable and, in their way, very eminent men, no doubt; but while everybody respected the great knowledge of the Forms and Usages of the House which two of the Members for the English Universities possessed, and the acquaintance with Ecclesiastical Art and History, as well as with the sentiments of the clergy, possessed by the two others, and while everybody felt that the House would suffer a loss if any one of the four were withdrawn from it, it could not be denied that not one of them did in any special manner represent Literature, Learning, Education or Science; and if any candidate was ever brought forward for the University who did represent Learning, Education or Science, he met with an ignominious defeat. For instance, Professor Henry Smith did not poll 1,000 votes at Oxford in 1878; and in the case of the Cambridge Election two years ago, Mr. Stuart, now happily a Member of the House, only obtained 1,200 or 1,300 votes. Whenever an attempt was made to put forward as a candidate for the University of Oxford or Cambridge, on non-political grounds, a man of conspicuous culture, distinguished in Literature or Science, or a great lawyer who had maintained a specially close connection with the life of the University, it was certain to be unsuccessful, because political considerations only were taken into account. Sixteen years ago, when a vacancy occurred at Oxford, an attempt was made to bring forward one of the most eminent sons of the University, distinguished first as a scholar, then as a jurist, fervently attached to the Church of England, and very moderate in his political views. What happened? The constituency was canvassed by letter for a few days, and it was found that the support which Sir Roundell Palmer was likely to receive was so insignificant in point of quantity, however respectable in quality, that his supporters at once withdrew him, and abandoned the idea of bringing forward a candidate. He might, therefore, fairly say that it was not the interests of the Teaching Universities, or of Literature, Education or Science that were considered, but that a University contest was conducted purely upon political motives; and if the aim of giving seats to the Universities was to provide for the representation of Literature, Education, Science and Art, that aim had utterly and hopelessly failed of attainment. Let it also be remembered that the House gained no new element from these seats, because the Members returned for the Universities were not Members who were new to the House. He must say that there had been one important exception in regard to the Scotch Universities, that of the Member for the Universities of St. Andrews and Edinburgh, who did contribute most valuable special knowledge and experience to their debates; but if they looked at the English Universities, they would find that for a long time back, the Members who had sat for them were Members of the ordinary type, and had already been Members of the House before they were returned for the Universities. Mr. Walpole long represented the University of Cambridge, and was regarded with universal respect and, he might say, affection while he was a Member of the House; but he had been Member for Midhurst before he was returned for the University. The present senior Representative for the University of Cambridge had sat for Stoke; the present junior Member had been Member for Preston. With regard to Oxford, Sir William Heathcote, who represented the University for some years, was, in the first instance, Member for South Hants; Mr. Gathorne Hardy, now Lord Cranbrook, had been Member for Leo-

minster; the present senior Member had represented Durham, and the junior Member one of the divisions of Kent. It would be found that no English University seat had, for a long time past, been the means of introducing a new Member to the House, and, therefore, the special object for which University seats were now alleged to have been given had not been attained. He had spoken so far of the English Universities only, not merely because they were those which hon. Members generally knew most about, but because it was on their model that seats had been given to the other Universities. If no seats had existed in connection with the English Universities, it was quite certain that none would have been given to the other Universities in other parts of the Kingdom. So far as the University of London was concerned, it was an artificial creation, if ever there was one, for it was not even a Teaching Body, and ought not to be called, in the ancient and proper sense of the word, a University at all. [Mr. R. N. FOWLER: It used to be.] That was quite true. It was once a Teaching Body, and he hoped to see it made once more a Teaching Body and a true University. But at present it was not; it was merely an Examining Body. He would pass on to the Scotch Universities. There, again, the seats had been conferred on the example and model of the English Universities. In the Scotch Universities the number of residents was extremely small, and one might say that the whole constituency consisted of persons unconnected with the teaching, and very faintly connected with the government, of the University. The number of voters for Glasgow and Aberdeen was 6,438, and for Edinburgh and St. Andrews 6,383. But these non-residents had no tie to bind them together; they were mostly medical men, scattered all over the country, who had not even the College feeling which existed among Oxford and Cambridge graduates, and they never took the slightest interest in their University, except when they received a circular asking them to vote for a particular candidate. They might as well give a man a vote for Brighton for the rest of his life, because he once happened to spend a year of his life there, as to give one to an English or Irish graduate of a Scotch University, who had lived in Glasgow or Edinburgh during the period that was occupied in taking his degree. Let them have, if they liked, a representation of professions as such—of physicians, of lawyers, of architects, of authors, of bankers, and so on; but do not give to the Members elected by clergymen in England and physicians in Scotland the artificial and unreal name of University Representatives. He felt more difficulty with regard to the two seats for the University of Dublin than he did with regard to the others, because, although they were practically mere *ex officio* seats for the Law Officers or ex-Law Officers of a present or late Conservative Government, as to the present Members, they were all glad to see them on the Front Opposition Bench, and they felt that the right hon. and learned Gentlemen in question might experience considerable difficulty in securing other seats in their own country. But still they gave an access to the House to men of distinction who might not so easily find their way in through other Irish constituencies. But, no doubt, there would remain a number of seats available for the so-called "Loyal" minority in Ireland; and the Irish Conservatives would be only too glad to put in the forefront such redoubtable champions as the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen. Therefore, he did not think that, so far as the University of Dublin was concerned, the cause of the Loyal minority would suffer if these seats were taken away. With respect to the number of new residents and teachers in the constituency, the University of Dublin was in a very similar position to the Scotch Universities—that was to say, the constituency consisted almost wholly of persons whose practical connection with the University had long since ceased; and it would be hard, upon any principle, to justify the allowance to it of two Representatives, because Dublin, with 4,000 voters, had two Members, while each group of Scottish Universities, with more than 6,000, had only one Member. He trusted that he had said nothing which could give personal offence to the University Members; and he hoped he had convinced the Committee that, whether he was right or wrong in his proposal, he had some substantial grounds for his belief that its adoption would be for the benefit of the Uni-

versities themselves. At present, the Universities lost something, and the country gained nothing, by the existing system of University representation. Not wishing to put his case too high, he did not maintain that any harm was suffered by the country, nor that the question was one of capital importance to it, but there was certainly no gain; and he contended, therefore, that a system of representation founded upon no solid sufficient ground, producing no practical benefit, giving second votes to persons who had no substantial claim to them, ought not to be continued. At that moment, they were going to increase the number of Members of the House when they ought rather largely to reduce that number, and there was, therefore, a special and grave reason for taking away these University seats. He could not but hope that this undesirability of enlarging the House would form a ground for inducing the Committee to give serious consideration to his proposition. Both the Government and the Leaders of the Opposition must see that the feature of their compact which excited most disapproval in the country was this particular proposal to increase the already overgrown number of Members. If they abolished University representation, they would obtain nine out of the 12 seats they required for increasing the Scotch representation, and the other three could be got from the three smallest boroughs. It was more than probable that his Amendment had very little chance of being accepted, because, although nearly all Liberals in their hearts approved of it, the Ministry might feel bound by their compact with the Opposition to resist the true interests of the Universities. Nevertheless, in those interests he felt bound to take the opinion of the Committee upon the matter. He submitted that while University representation might have been a fair experiment to try, and while there might have been valid reasons for instituting it three centuries ago, and for continuing to give it a chance for some years after 1832, it was an experiment which had been tried long enough, which had altogether failed to bring about any substantial or beneficial result, either to the country or to the Universities themselves. The time had now arrived when it became desirable to dismiss this device of the Stuart Kings to the limbo to which so many other of their devices had been relegated. He believed that when that happened, and no University any longer returned a Member to Parliament, no persons would be more pleased than the now misrepresented resident teachers of the Universities themselves.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 12, after the word "boroughs," to insert the words "and Universities."—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Perhaps it would be convenient I should say a few words on behalf of the Government, before the University Members take the opportunity of addressing the Committee. Sir, my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Bryce) began his very able speech in a Committee which was much smaller than it is at the present time; indeed, it was almost entirely a Committee of University Members. The state of the Committee was, I should think, unique in the history of Parliament, for all of the nine University Members were present. My hon. and learned Friend has spoken of University representation with considerable ability; but it is my duty to state why it is undesirable, at the present time, to disturb that representation. Speaking on a Bill which is the result of an arrangement, or of general consent, between the different Parties in the House, I must state, at once, as I have stated on a former occasion, that it is impossible for the Government to agree to the Amendment the hon. and learned Gentleman has moved. At the same time, although in this respect I do not speak the opinion of my Colleagues, I must say that, in my opinion, my hon. and learned Friend makes out an unanswerable case against University representation in the abstract. I believe it is perfectly unlikely that that representation will survive the next Conservative Reform Bill. My hon. and learned Friend has given many reasons for objecting to the University vote; but there is one reason which weighs with me more than any other. It applies equally to the freehold vote. I believe it is unwise and undesirable to give double representation in the House, because of any special qualifications;

and in connection with the point, I observed that one of the University Members opposite contradicted my hon. and learned Friend when he said most of the persons who possess University votes, also possess other qualifications. ["Not all!"] Well, substantially all. The fact that, in the past, a considerable number of the clergy did not possess the franchise was always one of the reasons which weighed with me in the extension of the franchise. Formerly, many curates were excluded from the franchise; but, now, under the extended franchise, almost the whole of the clergy will possess the franchise. ["No!"] I believe it is perfectly true, as stated by my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Bryce), that almost all of these gentlemen will now have votes. Now, the position of the Government to this matter is simply one of objecting to the Amendment which is placed before the Committee, and which, under the circumstances, I hope the Committee will reject by a large majority. Of course, we are free to express our individual opinions, and we should feel ourselves free to vote as we please if the subject came before the House in a separate form, and I should exercise that privilege in the manner I have shown the Committee. My hon. and learned Friend has shown, conclusively, that it is not necessary to have special University representation in order to represent learning in this House. A very singular illustration of this occurred the other day. A most distinguished man (Professor Stuart), immediately after an election in which a very small minority of the residents of the Cambridge University voted in his favour, came up to London and in one of the most democratic parts of the Metropolis was elected to this House by an overwhelming majority. That shows very clearly that the right hon. Gentleman the junior Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes) could, if he liked, be returned for any Conservative constituency. It is perfectly clear that special University representation is not needed in these days for the purpose of returning to this House men of education and intelligence. The days of special representation of that kind have passed. But my hon. and learned Friend has shown, I think, in his speech that, while he desires to see the opinions he holds on the subject make way in the country, as I am convinced they will, he does not expect to carry his Amendment on this occasion. I feel quite sure that he is well aware that his Amendment will be rejected by the Committee, for the Bill is one which has the general concurrence of all sections of the House. In many matters it is a compromise between various opinions; and, as we intend to stand by its provisions, I call upon the Committee to reject the Amendment.

Sir JOHN R. MOWBRAY believed he expressed the views of all the right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who represented Universities, when he thanked the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), for the conclusion at which he had arrived. While they would be very happy to go into the Lobby with the right hon. Baronet, they certainly could not accompany that act with an expression of thanks for his speech. Having regard to the fact that this was a Bill brought in by the Government after consultation with the Leaders of the Conservative Party, he was extremely surprised that the Member of the Cabinet in charge of the Bill should come forward to express his own individual opinions, and say that while he hoped the Committee would reject an Amendment, the arguments by which that Amendment were supported were unanswerable, and that if the subject were brought up in a separate form on another occasion, he would be prepared to vote for the change proposed. He (Sir John R. Mowbray) wished the right hon. Gentleman the Head of the Government (Mr. Gladstone) had been present to hear his Colleague's speech. It was well the Committee should know how far the President of the Local Government Board had represented the feelings of the united Cabinet. Hon. Members had a perfect right to complain of the course adopted by the right hon. Baronet, because the right hon. Baronet was one of the Members of the Cabinet who was specially concerned in arranging the compromise on the question of redistribution between the two great Parties of the House. If the right hon. Baronet thought that the argument in favour of the University seats was untenable, and quite indefensible, he (Sir John R. Mowbray)

would ask how the right hon. Baronet could consent, as a Member of the Committee of the Cabinet which met the Members of the Front Opposition Bench, to make so great a concession? He would not attempt to answer the speech of the right hon. Baronet, because he happened to know that they were going into the same Lobby; he would rather direct his attention to the speech of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce). It really was very affecting to hear the language in which his hon. and learned Friend introduced this proposal to the Committee. The hon. and learned Gentleman said it was a delicate duty he had to discharge. He (Sir John R. Mowbray) thought it must be a very delicate duty for a Regius Professor of Civil Law in the University of Oxford to propose such an Amendment as the Committee were now considering. The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Bryce) protested he was full of affection and loyalty to the Universities; that he spoke in the interest of the Universities, and for the benefit of the Universities. But his hon. and learned Friend could not be said to represent the whole University Body; indeed, he was obliged to construct a limited University of his own, a University of teachers, of whom there were 370. It really was very affecting to hear the hon. and learned Gentleman describe the disturbances which might arise in the academical walks of Christ Church and Magdalen by the introduction of politics. Who was injured by the introduction of politics? He supposed that the hon. and learned Gentleman himself did not wish that undergraduates should not talk politics. Many men had qualified themselves to take part in the debates of Parliament by being members of the Oxford Union Debating Society. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was one of the most distinguished men the Oxford Union Debating Society had turned out. That Society had also turned out Archbishops of Canterbury, Lord Chancellors, including the one to whom the hon. and learned Gentleman himself alluded, and other Cabinet Ministers. Did the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets speak for Heads of Houses; did he think that the introduction of politics into Universities disturbed the serene repose of Heads of Houses? No; he knew quite well that there was only one Head of a House who at all agreed with him in this matter. The hon. and learned Gentleman spoke of wrangling which went on in the common rooms on political matters, and said that University Tutors and Professors had no time for the discussion of politics. It was really absurd to ask the Committee to believe that this desire for quiet and exclusion of politics was the absorbing feeling of the residents. The hon. and learned Gentleman claimed to speak in the interest of the Universities. What support had he obtained in the Universities for the proposal he now made? He (Sir John R. Mowbray) might not ordinarily represent the opinions of the residents, but he did so to-night; and he asked the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets, if he had not tried for some weeks and months past to get up some movement, some sort of organization, some sort of Petition within the University of Oxford, and if he had not found cold water thrown on all his actions? If these 370 highly-educated men wished to devote themselves to literature and education and science, and did not wish to be disturbed by Party wrangles, why did not the hon. and learned Gentleman get half-a-dozen of them, or 37, say, out of the 370, to come to that House and present a Petition, praying for release from the political life into which they were plunged? His hon. and learned Friend said also that Convocation did not represent the University, and that Members of Parliament did not represent it either. The hon. and learned Gentleman argued that Convocation consisted, to a great extent, of men who had only been three years resident in the University—from the age of 18 to 21—that they then went away, and knew very little of what went on afterwards in the University. But were not those three of the most important years in a man's life; were they not years in which a man's character was developed and fixed; and, therefore, was it not very probable that a man having spent such years of his life in the University, retained throughout the rest of his life an affection for his College or University? The hon. and learned Gentleman really talked as if the Members for the Universities knew nothing about the Universities. He

(Sir John R. Mowbray) could tell his hon. and learned Friend that he had belonged to the University of Oxford close upon 52 years; and not one of those years had passed that he had not been within the walls of the University. He was intimately acquainted with every gentleman of any note in the University; he did know something of the University; indeed, he felt that, in opposing the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets, he represented the wishes, not merely of Convocation itself, but of the 370 teachers for whom his hon. Friend claimed to speak. The hon. and learned Gentleman made one most startling statement—namely, that the Members for the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were the nominees of the Carlton Club. If one suggestion more ludicrious than another had been made, it was that the Carlton Club had anything whatever to do with the elections in the Universities. His hon. and learned Friend must know better; he must know that no man could be a candidate for the representation of a University who had not been tried in the House. Men who were elected for the Universities must be known in public life and in University life; and it was because they were known in University life that they were accepted by the Universities. Nominees of the Carlton Club! A more unwarranted statement was never made in this world. His hon. and learned Friend went back to the origin of the representation, he said the representation was given to people resident within the University, and argued that now it was no longer necessary as it was in the days when the right was first conferred. He (Sir John R. Mowbray) might inform the Committee that, in the archives of the University of Oxford, there was a very interesting letter which was read in 1604, at the first election of Members for the University, and which set out the ground of the granting to the Universities of the privilege of returning Members to Parliament. The letter was written by Sir Edward Coke, who was then Attorney General, and it was read publicly in Convocation at the election in 1604. It was dated the 16th of March, 1603, and was as follows:—

"Having found by experience in former Parliaments, and especially when I was Speaker, how necessary it was for your University to have burgesses, and finding especially now of later times that many Bills are preferred in Parliament, and some have passed, which concern your University."

And then it was stated that the Government had granted to the University the privilege of returning Members. Well, everyone knew that many Bills had been preferred in Parliament concerning the Universities, as Sir Edward Coke, as Speaker for many years, had observed. It was therefore very important that the Universities should have representation in Parliament. Within the last 30 years, within his own experience, several Bills concerning the Universities had been brought into the House of Commons; and, during that time, it was as important as ever that there should be Representatives of the Universities in Parliament when those Bills were being discussed. There had been the Oxford Reform Bill of 1854, the Cambridge Bill of 1856, the Tests Act in 1871, and the Universities Act of 1877. Besides these Bills, there had constantly been Motions made with reference to ordinances and statutes; and, indeed, no Session had passed without some University question turning up. In fact, that which was now proposed was altogether a retrograde step. It was only 30 years ago he heard Lord John Russell, the then Leader of the House, when introducing his Reform Bill, propose, with universal assent, to give the privilege of returning a Member to the University of London; and when Mr. Disraeli, in 1867, carried out that which was the original proposal of Lord John Russell, there was one universal acclamation that a Member should be given to the University of London. And he (Sir John R. Mowbray) believed the whole House would agree with him that they had great reason to be proud that representation was conferred upon the University of London, when they recollected that that University had been successively represented by such eminent men as Lord Sherbrooke and the hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock) who now so worthily represented the constituency. He thought that even the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets would admit that the hon. Baronet represented literature, education and science, although, perhaps,

in forming the minds of the rising generation, had not instructed the hon. and learned Gentleman that, if he would look forward to a period 20 years hence, there would be a great preponderance of laymen in the Universities? He Sir John R. Mowbray contended that really this was a very extraordinary moment to make such a proposition as this. Parliament had just, by the Franchise Act, added 2,000,000 of capable citizens to the electoral roll. He cordially agreed with the extension of the franchise; he had never objected to it, provided there was a fair redistribution of seats; but no one could deny — the hon. and learned Gentleman could not deny — that the 2,000,000 of new voters included amongst them some who were not educated and who were not at all conversant with political questions. He Sir John R. Mowbray, therefore, asked, was it reasonable that, at the present moment, they should try the experiment proposed; was it reasonable that, while adding to the electoral roll 2,000,000 of persons, a large proportion of whom were not educated and not intelligent in political matters, they should disfranchise somewhere between 20,000 and 30,000 men of the highest education and the highest intelligence—entirely independent men, men who had studied politics in their earliest days, and who were eminently capable citizens? The hon. and learned Gentleman argued that he would not disfranchise such men, because he would let them have votes for the City of Oxford. Were the graduates of Oxford University to be transferred from the high academical constituency of which they were now members to that most corrupt constituency, the City of Oxford? The corruption of that city was so well known that a Writ was not issued when a vacancy occurred a year or two ago; and yet the hon and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets would bring the men of his own University, for whom he had such tender and kindly feelings, such affection, loyalty and regard, into the corrupt mass of the civil constituency of the City of Oxford. He (Sir John R. Mowbray was sure the true sons of Oxford University would no more thank the hon. and learned Gentleman for that suggestion than they thanked him for his present Amendment. Now, did the hon. and learned Gentleman really mean to say that the Universities had not, for 300 years past, well discharged their duty to the country and to the Crown by the men they had returned to the House of Commons? The hon. and learned Gentleman said he did not wish to introduce personal topics, and he was very good to speak in a kindly way of the Members for the Universities; but each of the Universities was brought up in a more or less disparaging manner. Let them see what sort of men had been returned by the Universities. Had not Oxford reason to be proud of such Representatives as Selden, Sir Matthew Hale, and Sir William Scott? Were they not among the greatest jurists who ever adorned any country? Had not Oxford reason to be proud of Sir Robert Peel, and of the present Prime Minister? [*Ironical cheers.*] Yes; he expected that interruption, and he was not surprised at it. Oxford returned those distinguished men, and when they changed their opinions in consequence of which Oxford returned them, Oxford rejected them. But what did that rejection imply? It implied a very high spirit on the part of the University. The men Oxford rejected on each occasion were the foremost men of powerful Ministries; they were Leaders of the House of Commons; and one was associated with the Duke of Wellington and the other with Lord Palmerston. That they rejected those two great men was, to his mind, a proof of the disinterested character of the constituency. He maintained that, whether the Universities had or had not returned men whose political opinions coincided with those of hon. Gentlemen opposite, they had returned men of whom the nation had reason to be proud. The elections in the Universities had always been conducted conscientiously. The electors had always been guided by intelligence, and there never had been a suspicion of corruption. He repudiated the suggestion that the Members for the Universities were the nominees of any political Party, and felt satisfied that the feeling both in and out of the House was favourable to the retention of the University constituencies. There was nothing to justify the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets, and therefore

he hoped the Committee would reject it by a large majority.

MR. ALBERT GREY said, he heard, with some surprise, the speech of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke). The right hon. Baronet declared it was his bounden duty to vote against the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce), because of the compact entered into by the occupants of the two Front Benches; but he accompanied that declaration by a speech which was nothing less than a command to hon. Members sitting on the Ministerial side of the House to vote in favour of the Amendment. What was the fundamental reason brought forward by the right hon. Baronet in support of his view that the Universities ought to be disfranchised? That it was undesirable to give a double representation to certain persons because of particular qualications. Well, he (Mr. Albert Grey) entirely agreed with his right hon. Friend that it would be very undesirable to give a double vote to any person in the Kingdom, if the Redistribution Bill about to be passed gave a security that the vote of every single elector should, as nearly as electoral arrangements would permit, count for as much as that of any other elector. If they were to have a system of fair and honest representation, which would insure to equal number of persons equal representation, then he would admit there would be a great argument in favour of the disfranchisement of the Universities. But when they were about to adopt a plan which, so far from giving true representation, would give an altogether sham representation of the people, a plan which would make the votes of one set of electors worth three or four times as much as that of another set, there was not only a very strong, but an absolutely overwhelming case in favour of the preservation of the University constituencies; the retention of the Universities was necessary to repair in some degree the inequality created by the present Bill. It was the experience of other countries—of France and of America—that, under the single-district plan, the more educated and cultivated portions of the community were swamped altogether—unable to find any representation, either in their National Assembly or in their Congress; and it had been held both in America and in France, that, if by the substitution of proportional representation the more intelligent minorities could secure the return of their own candidates, intellect would be able to return its own Representatives to the Representative Assembly, and those Representatives would wield in the Chamber an influence out of all proportion to their numerical strength. It was because he believed that the effect of the single-district plan would be to reduce the influence of the intelligent minority, that he was in favour of the retention of the University constituencies. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board pointed to the hon. Member for Hackney (Professor Stuart) as a proof of the fact that intellect could find representation in the most popular constituencies; but they ought not to forget the saying of Lord Palmerston — that the extension of the franchise might not result in sending a different class of Members to the House, but the difference would be this, that the same men would play to the gallery, instead of to the boxes. Depend upon it, that the men of culture who were returned by men of culture would be a very different class of Members to the men of culture who were returned by men wanting in culture. What was the object of Reform? Was it not to obtain a good House of Commons? If so, he thought the right hon. Gentleman would admit that variety in the representation was absolutely essential. They must have security for an adequate variety of representation in order to get a good House of Commons. All former Reform Bills had been framed with the object of securing this variety. In order to get a compound House of Commons, Parliament hitherto had been careful to preserve inequality of franchise and great difference in the size of constituencies; but by the Bill which was now brought forward by the two Front Benches they were about to remove these securities for variety. They were to have a uniform franchise; and they were about to make their constituencies almost identical in size; and that meant that, with the levelling agency of the Press and the railways, nearly every constituency in the Kingdom would tend to become more and more similar. They were thus about to abandon that old security

for a variety of representation and for a compound House of Commons which they had when they had an unequal franchise and different sized constituencies. He was not making these remarks as an argument in favour of the system that was being left behind. He believed there was another way of securing a compound House, a way based on absolute justice, being founded on the principle of one man, one vote, and every vote an equal value. That was a way, however, which at present was more popular in the country than, he was sorry to say, it was in the House. As, however, the House had determined not to adopt the only other alternative for insuring adequate variety in the representation, and was resolved upon establishing a system which would deprive the country of all security for a compound House of Commons, he maintained that, so far from wishing to abolish University representation, which introduced the only element of variety into their otherwise uniform plan, they ought to preserve it most carefully. While upon this point, he would like to quote two authorities, whom he was sure would be accepted as good authorities by those who sat on the Ministerial side of the House. The late Mr. Stuart Mill, who strongly favoured University representation, advocated the bestowing of additional votes upon those who satisfied a certain standard of education and intelligence, relying upon direct representation of intellect and the adoption of some form of proportional representation as the chief safeguards against the danger of democracy. Mr. Bagehot, who regretted that direct representation of intelligence was impossible, maintained, nevertheless, that it was of vital importance that whatever could be done in this direction should be done. He said

"All that can be done in this direction must be effected by a general extension of the principle which has given Members to our Universities. No one can obtain admission to those bodies without a prolonged course of study, or without passing a strict examination in several subjects. This is a kind of franchise not to be manufactured, it is only obtained as a collateral advantage by persons who are in pursuit of quite different objects. Such bodies, however, are obviously few, and such kinds of franchise are necessarily limited. But they should be extended as far as possible."

The arguments of his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets struck him Mr. Albert Grey as being very surprising and very inconsistent. The hon. Member objected to University representation, because men living outside the Universities swamped the votes of those who resided in the vicinity of the University itself. That he offered as a reason for abolishing University representation altogether. (Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Hear, hear!) The Secretary of State for the Home Department cheered that remark. He Mr. Albert Grey did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was in favour of University representation or against it. Perhaps he had not made the point clear. The argument of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets was that the electors living outside the University swamped the votes of the men living in the University; therefore, University interests were insufficiently represented in the House of Commons, and therefore the Universities should not have any representation at all. His hon. and learned Friend went on to say that in the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, against which his speech was chiefly directed, matters were mainly controlled and governed by clerical influence. He Mr. Albert Grey admitted that readily; but that was no argument for the abolition of University representation; it was rather an argument for the extension of the University franchise than for its extinction. It was in the power of the House to secure that the electorate of the old Universities should be framed upon the model of the electorate existing in the Universities in Scotland. If that were the case, the whole body of graduates would have a vote for the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge; and once that came to pass, it would soon be found that clerical influence, so far from controlling the representation, would only be a minor fraction in the constituent body. Of course, the clerical influence at Oxford and Cambridge controlled, at present, the representation of those constituencies, and why? Simply because, up to 1871, every elector for Oxford and Cambridge had to subscribe his adherence to the formularies of the Church of England; they had to do that before they could exercise the privilege of voting at a University election. At Oxford, the

genius. Take the case of the University of Dublin. What was the Parliamentary history of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for that University Mr. Plunket? He was defeated for the City of Dublin, and the University gave him a refuge; and he (Mr. Albert Grey) did not think there was a single person in the House who would wish to see the right hon. and learned Gentleman excluded from Parliament He had now endeavoured to bring before the Committee some answers against the arguments adduced by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets, and some reasons why it was desirable not to get rid of University representation until a system of fair representation was adopted. If there was proportional representation, which would give every vote an equal value, then University representation might go; but until we got that, he should cling like a leech to every University seat. As he had mentioned the words proportional representation, let him make one suggestion to the right hon. Baronet Sir Charles W. Dilke who spoke from the Front Bench The right hon Baronet told them he was against University constituencies, but that he was obliged to vote for them on this occasion. If he was against University constituencies, he could not care very much what method of representation was put in force in those constituencies. They were exceptional constituencies, therefore they were the very constituencies on which an experiment might be made. Why not amalgamate the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and elect their Members by the system of proportional representation? (*A laugh*) He made the suggestion to his right hon. Friend in earnest. It was not yet too late On Report, let them make the Amendment. Hon. Gentlemen opposite had received a warning; and, if they wished to retain the University constituencies, they ought to adopt some system which would make them palatable to Members on that side of the House Let him say what he thought would be the best thing to do. Let them take away a Member from Oxford and Cambridge and give it to the Scotch Universities. Let them make Oxford and Cambridge one constituency, and the Scotch Universities one constituency; and then let the Members, each constituency having three Representatives, be elected upon the single transferable vote system. Such a suggestion could very easily be adopted on Report. As the University Members were to be retained, the method of election could not be a vital matter. He hoped that, by accepting the suggestion, the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board would show he had something more than an academical sentiment in favour of proportional representation. He (Mr. Albert Grey) trusted the House might see fit, on the Report stage, to make an experiment on the very constituencies which ought, from their exceptional nature, to be made the subject of a most important and interesting experiment.

Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey) referred to an argument which was used by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), in expressing his approval of a great deal of what had been said in favour of the Amendment. It was argued that University representation gave double representation, and the right hon. Gentleman was opposed to that. He (Mr. J. A. Campbell) did not follow the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Northumberland in his answer to the right hon. Gentleman; but he thought there was another answer which could be made to the President of the Local Government Board, and that was that the argument against double representation could scarcely be fairly brought forward in favour of the Amendment, inasmuch as double representation was not against the principle of the Bill they were now discussing. His hon and learned Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce), in his speech in introducing the Amendment, gave a description of a University which he (Mr. J. A. Campbell) was rather surprised to hear from one who knew the Universities of Scotland so well as the hon. and learned Gentleman did. There seemed to be an idea in his mind that a University consisted of a body of teachers only, rather than of University graduates. That was not at all the idea in Scotland. The Scottish Universities were certainly teaching Universities; they had a large staff of teachers; but it never occurred to the people of Scotland that the teachers

constituted the University. His hon. and learned Friend threw rather a slight upon the Universities of Scotland as constituencies by saying that the graduates never heard of their Universities, except in connection with Parliamentary elections. That was a mistake. The graduates of the Scottish Universities were associated together for other purposes than for electing Parliamentary Representatives. They were reminded twice a year of their duties as members of the General Council; and they had to take part in elections which had nothing whatever to do with politics. It had been asked whether the Universities gained by having Parliamentary representation. Now, he should say that that was not the object for which Parliamentary representation was given to the Universities; certainly, it was not the object in view when the franchise was conferred upon the Universities of Scotland and of London. He could not speak so confidently of the franchise given in olden times to the ancient Universities of England, and he was not aware of what the case was in Ireland. But although the franchise was not granted with the object of benefiting the Universities, he could say that the possession of the franchise had been a gain to the Universities of Scotland. It came after some important measures of reform which gave the graduates a much greater interest in those institutions; it was the crowning work of that reform; and since that time—he did not say altogether in consequence of the franchise being given them — there had been a new start made by the Universities. The real question for consideration, however, was, whether the country gained by the arrangement — for representation was conferred on the Universities not for the sake of the Universities, but for the sake of the country. It appeared to him that the franchise was given to the Universities in order that there should be some Members of the House of Commons whose special duty was to attend to a certain class of interests; to attend to education and all connected with it, including the interests of the learned Professions. Other interests were represented in the House. The borough Members took the special responsibility of attending to questions of trade and commerce; and county Members were supposed to have a special responsibility with regard to agricultural matters. Well, why should not the interests of education and cognate subjects also have their special Representatives in the House? It did not follow, by any means, that there might not be borough and county Members more influential in regard to educational subjects than the University Members. He had many Members in his eye, who were much more qualified to speak for education, literature, and science than at least one of the University Members, and he did not know that there was any one better qualified to speak on such subjects than the hon. and learned Gentleman who had brought forward the Amendment. At the same time, that qualification on the part of borough or county Members was an accident; they had not been elected to Parliament on account of it, but had been returned to watch over other subjects, and upon other considerations altogether. This question must be dealt with in an impersonal manner. He would say that, although the University Members might, as individuals, have failed to come up to the standard of qualification and of service expected of them, yet it still remained true that the interests of education and of cognate subjects were of sufficient national importance to justify the election to the House of certain Members, who should be looked upon as having a special responsibility in regard to those subjects, so as to secure for them full attention from Parliament. It was in that view that he ventured, humbly, to say that University representation was valuable, and that he trusted the Committee would, by a large majority, reject the Amendment.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, he rose to support the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce). The hon. Gentleman who spoke last (Mr. J. A. Campbell) had, he thought, put the matter thoroughly on the right ground. They were not concerned at all with what might have been the original motive which prompted the King or Parliament to give Members to the Universities; they were not concerned with the question whether or not the franchise so conceded had been of advantage to the

Universities as corporations. The question they had to put to themselves was this—Was it to the advantage of the country, and an advantage to the Parliamentary representation, that there should be special Representatives in the House of the special interests or corporations which existed in the Universities? The presumption, he thought, was against those who wished to constitute special Representatives of groups of persons taken out of the general mass of citizenship. They had these University Members, and, therefore, many acquiesced in the idea of retaining them; but he did not suppose that anyone would suggest an extension of this kind of representation. They remembered that when Mr. Disraeli brought in his first draft of one of his Reform Bills in 1867, there were what were called "fancy franchises" in it. They were not to be grouped together into separate constituencies, if he (Mr. Stanley) recollected rightly; but, at any rate, the idea of giving a man a vote because he was a doctor, or a lawyer, or had taken a University degree, or anything of that sort, was not viewed with favour in Parliament. The general feeling was, he thought, that the basis of Parliamentary representation was common citizenship, and that the natural centre round which a constituency should be aggregated was a local centre—a centre of local community of interest. Well, was there any reason why these exceptional constituencies should be favoured, or should be allowed to continue to exist? Did they confer any benefits on the nation through the Representatives they were likely to send to Parliament? He did not wish to say anything discourteous—it would be improper, and not in accordance with the facts, if they were to say anything derogatory to the hon and right hon Gentlemen who now represented the Universities in Parliament. It was not from that point of view that he would wish to approach the question at all; but they were told—the hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Glasgow had just told them—that the justification of these constituencies was that they sent Members to Parliament specially charged with the duty of watching over the interests of education That, he (Mr. Stanley) thought, was a fair representation of the justification that the hon. Member put forward. Well, he could bear cordial testimony to the fact that, at any rate, so long as he had been in Parliament, the Members for the Scotch Universities had taken a great and progressive interest in the cause of education; and he thought it was one of the most refreshing things they experienced in their contact with Scotch Members that, irrespective of political Party, they all alike desired to promote the cause of education. It was a most remarkable thing—if he might be allowed to use it as an illustration—last Session, when a Bill was passing through Parliament with reference to the reform of Scotch educational endowments, to see hon. Members on the opposite Benches, especially the hon. Member for the University of Glasgow and the hon. Member for Bute (Mr. Dalrymple), so active in pressing on the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella) a more progressive, and a more liberal policy in the matter of education than the Government were inclined, in the first instance, to take up. Therefore, they could not help recognizing the fact that the cause of education had been generally supported by the Scotch University Members irrespective of their politics. But could hon. Members believe, for one moment, that it was because these hon. Gentlemen represented Scotch Universities that they supported the cause of education? Was it not rather because of the healthy foundation of the Scotch political character? Was it not rather to be accounted for by the love of education which, for generations, had been instilled into the Scotch character? He thought, however, that the more highly they appraised the character of the English University Members, the more they must recognize the fact that—probably owing to some inherent defect in the constituencies they represented—the attitude of those hon. Gentlemen towards education in England had been found rather antagonistic to, than in favour of, the promotion of the cause of education. The right hon. Gentleman the Representative of the University of Oxford (Sir John R. Mowbray) had told the Committee how, for many years in the House, he had had to watch over Bills affecting University education. He (Mr. Stanley) would like to ask the right hon. Member whether

it was not the fact that the vigilant watchfulness which he had exercised over all the University Bills had rather the effect of postponing their passing into law, or introducing into them restrictive Amendments which the country did not approve of; and he could not help remembering the speeches delivered year by year, on the Education Estimates, by the other hon. Member for the University of Oxford, in which there was no plea for the extension of education, but rather of keeping it back in accordance with the limited means of the denominational system. He regretted to find that the influence these constituencies brought to bear on their Representatives was not an influence which made them the champions of education, a title which their own cultivation would, doubtless, have resulted in their winning, if they had had the good fortune to plunge into some democratic constituency. He felt quite sure that, if either of the two Members for the University of Oxford were representing the Conservative side in Manchester or Sheffield, the House would find them very much more in favour of an advanced and liberal elementary education, such as the school boards of those great towns had so successfully promoted, than they were now, representing the ancient Universities. As a matter of fact, it was quite idle to say that the Representatives of the English Universities represented learning or culture in any sense whatever. In the first place, as had been pointed out by the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), the constituencies of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were not the graduates. The constituencies were plutocracies. The Universities, he was sorry to say, did not give their degrees in relation to merit, or in relation to advancement. The degree of Master of Arts, which entitled a man to vote, was sold for a money consideration; and yet that degree represented not one atom of educational progress beyond the degree of Bachelor of Arts. [Oh, oh!] Those who cried "Oh, oh!" probably had not had the advantage of a University education. The Universities not only "sold" the degrees—and that was the plainest word for a plain fact—but they also charged a yearly tariff for the privilege of exercising the University franchise. It was not only necessary to have taken the Master of Arts degree to have the franchise, but to pay annual fees, or commute them by the payment of a lump sum. He would not say a word against any Member now in the House; but he might, perhaps, be allowed to refer to an analysis of the votes taken on the great occasion when the Prime Minister was turned out of the representation of the University of Oxford. That analysis was very remarkable—he was not speaking of a comparison between the resident and non-resident voters, but of an analysis of the University voters that had been taken. The analysis showed a perfect curve—he did not know what formula could be found to express it mathematically; but the curve descended from University prizemen, First Class men, and men who had Fellowships, through the Second and Third Classes, until they got to the Fourth Class, and then the upward curve, in favour of the Prime Minister's opponent, who was elected, reached the level of the descending curve, or those who had voted for the Prime Minister. When they got to the pass men, that curve mounted up with great rapidity, and placed Lord Cranbrook—then Mr. Gathorne Hardy—in a vast majority; and he (Mr. Stanley) could not help thinking that if the person who had prepared the table had ascertained who those who had obtained their position on the roll through two or three successive plucks, they might be found to mount up even more rapidly. The electoral roll of the University represented, to a large extent, the willingness of people to go on to the Master's degree, and to pay the necessary fees. They were anxious to keep their names on the books for election purposes. In many cases, however, gentlemen were less animated by political considerations than what he might call a desire for millinery—a strong desire to wear the crimson hood, which had a better appearance in church than that which was presented by the less ornamental ermine tippet of the Bachelor of Arts. That would explain how it was that so many more clergymen than laymen were members of the Convocation of the University of Oxford. The hon. Gentleman who had spoken below him (Mr. Albert Grey) had sketched out a possible constituency of the Universities

of Oxford and Cambridge—an amalgamation of the two, and a new method of voting to render the representation acceptable. But he (Mr. Stanley) was sure it would be much better to abolish the four seats of the Universities altogether than to jerrymander them in that way; to subject them to arithmetical calculations, shifting votes, and arrangements, which would only lead to hopeless confusion. These constituencies were much too old to alter their ways, and to be made the subject of an experiment in proportional voting.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE said, it had no doubt been satisfactorily proved to him that he was an unfortunate creature, who knew nothing nor cared anything about literature, or culture, or science; and that he represented a body of people who were in the same unfortunate position; yet, with or without success, literature was a subject which had occupied a good deal of his time and thoughts during his life; indeed, if he had attended less to literature and more to politics, his success might have been greater. He would admit his want of culture; but, at all events, he would not, like the honourable and very superior Gentleman who had just spoken, treat this subject by a series of bad jokes about ermine and red hoods. It would, at all events, receive serious treatment from him. The only attempt at an argument used by the hon. Member for Oldham (Mr. Lyulph Stanley), was a sort of inchoate argument, a little timid creeping thing, like a rabbit in a warren, which murmured about representation being based upon a local centre. But was not a University a local centre? The Universities were concentrated centres of learning and teaching, and, as some had said, of high thinking and low living. The hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) felt that; but he went wrong from not feeling something more. The Universities were not only a joint stock company for the promotion of research, entitled it might be to the representation of that research as exclusively embodied in the limited number of persons engaged in such research, but they were also the machinery by which a large class of the people, belonging generally to what was called the governing class, were able to attain that culture which was necessary to enable them to discharge their duties in life with reason, with success, and with a broad view of the proportion of things. The non-resident was not the old-fashioned country bumpkin depicted in some comedy of the last century. The non-residents were rather the mind of the country. "Oh, oh!" He would trouble the hon. Gentleman who called "Oh!" to deny that the lawyers and the doctors and other educated Professions were the mind of the country, and yet the lawyers and doctors and so forth formed a large proportion of the non-resident graduates. Anyone cognizant of University politics must know very well how large a share the Temple and Lincoln's Inn had had in settling the representation of the Universities. Even, if among the non-residents might be found country squires, whose degree was a poll or a pass one, and whose talk was of bullocks and such things, was it not something to be able to talk of bullocks with that reasonable education which any degree indicated, and which gave that average of culture which every man who was more or less a leader of his countrymen ought to possess? As for the cry of clerical preponderance, that was amply and fully disposed of by the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey). Of course, as long as there were tests, the representation was of necessity Church of England representation; but when the tests were abolished the Universities were at once thrown open to all beliefs. The old constituency had been an excellent one; but it was limited. Now it was not done away with, only enlarged. As to the contention raised about the formal process by which the degree of Master of Arts was attained, it was conveniently forgotten that the degree of Batchelor came necessarily first, and that the examinations came at that stage. After all, what was this outcry against University representation? The numerical principle as governing the distribution of seats was now to be made stronger, more consistent, and more universal than by any previous Reform Bill, and yet they were afraid of nine men out of 670. It seemed to be thought that these nine men would be more than a match for the remaining 661. The weak point of the new distribution was the risk of giving an undue preponderance to mere local feeling; and this was, to a certain

extent, counterbalanced by such widespread constituencies as those of the Universities with an intellectual qualification. He had but one more consideration to urge. He would ask what sort of men had of old been returned for the Universities? He owned to some pride when he thought of such Representatives as Palmerston, or the present honoured Chancellor of Cambridge, the Duke of Devonshire. But he had greater names than these to advance. He was the successor of Bacon, Newton, and Pitt. He could not, let him say, name these without confessing how deeply he felt the responsibility of such an inheritance. Such men might be again returned for a University, would they certainly be so for the division of a county or the ward of a borough? He must resist the proposal as hopelessly reactionary and deplorably Philistine.

SIR LYON PLAYFAIR: The hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) is such a friend to higher education, and is such an excellent type of academic training, that the Universities may well be surprised that the blow against their representation has come from him. If we were now engaged in founding a new representative system, some of his arguments would be strong. A double vote to one man, it may be in the same town, is certainly an anomaly; but our existing representative system is full of anomalies, even in regard to double voting. This special anomaly of which he complains has existed in regard to the older Universities since 1603 for England and 1613 for Ireland. University representation was then granted by Charter, perhaps by a stretch of Royal Prerogative. But it was accepted by the House of Commons, and was ratified by the Court of King's Bench. The Universities exercised so well their privileges that Parliament extended them by statute to the Scottish Universities, and to the London University. In the long exordium of the original Charters, James I. explains that the interests of learning and of religion deserve to be represented in the House, as well as the material interests of the Kingdom. We now know more clearly than that Monarch did how much the material interests of a nation depend upon the diffusion of learning and science. This recognition of their mutual dependence is, to my mind, the only justification for the representation of Universities at the present day. Undoubtedly, University Representatives must be politicians; for, if they are not, they should not sit in Parliament. But they must be more than mere Party politicians. They are returned, or they ought to be returned, to Parliament because they are fitted to represent the higher interests of learning and science. There are numerous subjects affecting the common weal which are above the region of Party conflicts. They may, or may not, have direct reference to Universities; but they relate to their work. For instance, the primary education of the people, the secondary education of the middle classes, the relations of science to the progress of manufacturing industry, the health of large communities, are subjects depending upon learning and science, and these then become important factors in the deliberations of the House. When University Members put their Party politics in the background, and discuss such questions as these with a single desire to promote the common good, the House always bestows confidence on them, and, frequently, is guided by their advice. Is it not wise that we should have among us a few Members to whom such questions are of more interest than the struggles of Party warfare? Personally, I can state with pride and satisfaction that I have always found the House on both sides willing to allow me to share in such deliberations without accusing me of pedantry. I am sure that my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), who sits on this side, as well as my University Colleagues on the other side, can state, with equal satisfaction, that they have received similar indulgence from the House when they have had occasion to address it on academic or scientific subjects. I wish to draw the attention of the House to the difference between the position of England and foreign nations as to higher education, so as to explain why it is important for this country to continue University representation. Unless this difference is understood it is, undoubtedly, a strong argument that, while our Continental neighbours promote science and learning more than we do, they have not found it necessary to represent Universities in

their Legislative Assemblies. In those nations all education—primary, secondary, and University—is the special object of State supervision and control. Each nation has a separate Minister of Education, with large funds at his disposal; and that Minister is the responsible Representative in Parliament for their progress and efficiency. In our country we had no national system, even of primary education, till 1870; our secondary education is even now entirely chaotic, and is independent of State supervision; while our Universities are autonomous, and are only responsible to themselves. Even the Scottish Universities, which are the only Universities to which we give Parliamentary grants, are independent of administrative control, and do not even make Reports for the information of Parliament. It is under these different circumstances that this nation has thought it wise to have Representatives of higher education in this House. Whether we should abandon our system of Representatives of education for the centralized system of Ministerial responsibility is a question too large for discussion at present; but you must have one or other, unless England is to abandon her position among nations. ["No, no!"] For my own part, I believe that representation of higher education, rather than administrative centralization, is more consonant with our ideas and institutions. I observed that there was some dissent when I said we must have one or other system inside Parliament, so I venture to give my reasons. I doubt whether even all the Members of this House are aware of the enormous efforts which have been made in recent years on the Continent to promote University education. These efforts are founded on the conviction, in which I profoundly share, that the competition of nations, both in war and in peace, has ceased to be a competition of brute force, or of local advantages, but has resolved itself into a competition of intellect. As Jules Simon has tersely put it—that nation which has the best educated people must become the greatest nation, if not to-day, certainly to-morrow. Let me state in a few words what France is now doing for her University education. Before the Great Revolution France had 22 autonomous Universities, which gave intellectual life to the Provinces. Napoleon, with the powers of a despot, and the instincts of a drill sergeant, converted them into Faculties, and created a single University of France, which was centralized in Paris. Under this baneful centralization the Faculties dwindled away. By 1868, the subventions to the University had diminished to an insignificant sum. The war with Germany came, and France was beaten. Then the French Institute fully discussed the causes of the disaster; and came to the conclusion that the intellectual paralysis of France was due to the destruction of her higher education. France, though loaded with debt, and competing with us in iron-clads, has made surprising efforts to recover her intellectual position; for she feels that it is not by men alone, but by the intellectual and moral force of her people, that she can cope with Germany, either in war or in peace. Since 1868 no less a sum than £3,280,000 (82,000,000 francs) has been spent by France in rebuilding her provincial Colleges, and the annual subvention for their support in 1884 was, in round numbers, £500,000. Has Germany been indifferent to this remarkable development in the higher education of France? Has she merely strengthened the fortifications of Strasburg which passed over to her in the war? Germany has rebuilt the University at great cost, having equipped it with eight laboratories, the smallest of which, that for physiology, cost £14,000, and the largest, for chemistry, £35,000. It also gives to it an annual subvention of £46,000. Germany has now 21 Universities, with 24,000 students and 1,800 Professors. The annual Votes are close on £400,000, besides the extraordinary expenditure for buildings, amounting to half as much more. I have only time for one other illustration, and I take the case of the Netherlands, because its population only slightly exceeds that of Scotland, and its total revenue is only £9,000,000. Yet it has four Universities, and votes for their support £136,000 yearly; while Scotland, with the same number supported by the State, receives from Parliament £30,000 annually. You will now understand why I have drawn attention to this remarkable progress of higher education among our Continental competitors. Either foreign nations are extravagantly absurd in the attention which they give to higher education, or

we are surprisingly weak in doing so little. If, however, it is possible that Continental nations may be right in believing that the competition of the world has become a competition of intellect, it is unwise at this time that you should be asked to do anything that will depress the position of our Universities in the public estimation. In the eyes of the world the suppression of University representation is not an act that would commend higher education to the people, or promote the development of institutions absolutely essential to our national progress. Unless you are prepared to imitate the system of foreign countries by substituting Ministerial responsibility for their administration and welfare, I trust that you will continue our present mode of recognizing the importance of our Universities by allowing their Representatives to share in the deliberations of the great Council of the nation. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) has spoken to us to-night in a manner different to that in which he spoke when the question of the reform of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge was before the House. Then, wrapped in his University toga, he spoke as a Conservative. Now, he has cast it off, and has spoken as a Radical. My right hon. Friend has advanced far in his Radicalism with respect to education, and fails to see the danger there is to the community if we show how little regard we have for the higher interests of education when it is proposed to abolish its representation in this House. I hope the House will not agree to the Amendment, and will not consent to refuse admission to the great Council of the nation of those who especially represent the interests of learning.

Mr. HORACE DAVEY said, he was obliged to say, though he said it with reluctance, that he felt constrained to vote for the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce). He was not likely to underrate the value of University education or the extension of University education and University influence in the country. There was, he supposed, no one who owed more to University education and University training than the humble individual who had the honour to address the Committee at that moment, and he quite agreed with what the right hon. Gentleman below him (Sir Lyon Playfair) had said on the subject as to the advantage to the House of having in it Representatives of the higher education and higher culture of the country. But, he would ask, what had that to do with the representation of the Universities? Could it be said that University representation was, in any sense, the representation of a living University? It was difficult to discuss the question without appearing to make personal allusions, and he therefore said at once that he was quite aware, and cordially agreed, that there were no Members in the House who were more respected and whose opinions were more looked up to than those who represented the Universities. But, admitting all that, he would ask, did the University constituencies at the present time represent real living Universities? Now, what was a University constituency? It was not a number of people who were engaged in teaching and were connected with the culture and education of the country at a University. It consisted of Masters of Arts, and Masters of Arts were gentlemen scattered all over the country—country clergymen, country squires, London lawyers, and people of that kind. What connection had they with that living University which was supposed to represent the learning and literature and science of the country—the body concentrated within the walls of the University itself. If the University representation were a real one—a representation of science and learning and literature—though he should look upon it as an anomaly, he should not be disposed to vote with the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets. But everyone knew that the constituencies of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who represented the Universities in the House were people whose connection with the Universities consisted, for the most part, in their having succeeded in struggling through a pass degree, some 20 or 30, or perhaps 40 years ago, with a view to admission into Holy Orders—people who had no real connection with the living University, which we supposed to represent science and literature and learning. He believed it was notorious that, if they took into consideration the votes of the resident mem-

bers of the Universities, it would be found that the majority of those gentlemen were not on the side which elected the present University Members to the House. It appeared to him that the conditions had entirely changed since representation in the House was accorded to the Universities. The greater facilities for communication which now existed, and the change of habits which had taken place had entirely altered the character of the University constituencies. In the days when University representation in Parliament was accorded to the Universities, the difficulties of communication and expense of travelling made it practically impossible for the non-resident Members of Convocation, who had severed their connection with the University, to exercise the franchise. The franchise in those days was practically confined to those men who were actually engaged in the teaching and learning of the Universities. They were the men whom it was intended to represent in the House. But of late years the conditions had entirely altered. Fellows of the Colleges no longer continued to reside at their University, as they used to do formerly, and the University constituencies now consisted of people scattered all over the country, who, perhaps, took no interest in, had no care for, and no connection with, the Universities, beyond the fact that they were periodically asked to fill up a voting paper for the election of a Member of Parliament. Now, he need not say that he should regret extremely the absence from the House of the right hon. Gentleman who had just addressed them (Mr. Beresford Hope), and, if he might venture to say so, of the other hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who represented the Universities in the House on either side of it; but he felt certain that those Members would speak with quite as much force, and probably with greater freedom, if they represented constituencies other than Universities. Why was this representation anomalous? Why, the constituents of hon. and right hon. Members who represented Universities in the House, in almost every instance, had a vote for some other qualification. If he (Mr. Davey) was a resident in London he had a vote for the metropolitan borough within which he resided; and if he was a country clergyman, he had a vote for the county in which his living was situated; so that the University franchise was merely a means of giving a second vote to a certain class of people. He asked by what justice, by what right, was it that any of the country clergymen, or, he might say, that he (Mr. Davey) himself, had a second vote for a University when he already possessed one as the occupier of a house in the borough in which he resided? In olden times, he could quite understand that it was right that the Universities should be represented, because the constituents, for the most part, consisted of resident members within the Universities. These gentlemen were excluded from the franchise in the city of Oxford and the borough of Cambridge, and it was but just and right that they should return their Members, otherwise there would have been no representation for them in Parliament. But now the constituents had facilities for voting, in the shape of voting papers, great facilities for travelling and communication, and were not resident members of the Universities. The resident members did, in a sense, represent science and literature, and learning; but that could not be pleaded in the case of the non-residents scattered all over the country, who were already represented by other qualifications. The right hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope) had—with justifiable pride—referred to his distinguished Predecessors in the representation which he adorned; but it had occurred to him (Mr. Davey) that that was rather an unfortunate topic to touch upon. The right hon. Gentleman had mentioned Lord Palmerston's name; but, if he (Mr. Davey) remembered rightly, when Lord Palmerston exhibited an independence of thought on the question of Catholic Emancipation he ceased to represent the University. Well, Oxford University was at one time represented by Sir Robert Peel. How was Sir Robert Peel discovered from the University? Why, when he announced that he was convinced of the necessity of Catholic emancipation, and when he determined to vote for it, and showed some independence of thought on a subject in regard to which, no doubt, every Member of the House to-day would be in entire agreement with him, the University of Oxford at once discovered itself from one of its most distinguished Re-

presentatives. They all knew what occurred when the right hon. Gentleman at the head of Her Majesty's Government (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) exhibited an independence of thought, which did not suit the constituency of the University of Oxford. The right hon. Gentleman had not only adorned the representation of that University, but his connection both with literature and learning and the distinguished degree which he had taken as a student there, marked him out as the person who, of all others, mostly justified University representation. But what happened? The right hon. Gentleman was dismissed from the representation. And hon. Members would find that, invariably, when a University had had the good fortune to be represented by a man—he would not say of the distinction of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, but by any man who took an independent line of his own, it had rejected him. It seemed to him (Mr. Davey) that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets had been amply justified in bringing this question before the Committee. The hon. Member could not have taken action through any feeling of disrespect to the Universities, for not only was he a distinguished member of one of them, but he had an official connection with it. University representation, however, was in itself an anomaly, and was not justified by the circumstances of the case.

MR. STAVELEY HILL said, his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Christchurch (Mr. Horace Davey) had said he would have no objection to there being a representation of a University, if that representation were of, what he was pleased to call, the real living University. Those who knew Oxford at the present day would not have much difficulty in following the hon. and learned Gentleman in distinguishing between the teaching Body of the University and those who had gone forth from the University. He (Mr. Staveley Hill and others of the University of Oxford, who possessed seats in the House, claimed to be as great a part of the real living Body of the University as was the teaching Body. Why should the teaching Body be represented, and not the thing taught; why should those whose object was to instruct persons before they went out into the world have their Representative, and those who had been taught in the University not be considered such a portion of the University as to have also a share in the representation of the University in the House of Commons? The hon. and learned Gentleman, who brought forward this Amendment (Mr. Bryce), said that, although it might have been the right thing in old days that the Universities should have their Representatives, at the present time circumstances were so altered, and people were so entirely separated from the Universities, that it was not necessary that the Universities should have special representation. Allow him (Mr. Staveley Hill) to say that a close examination of those who still remained members of Convocation in Oxford, and of those who still remained members of the Senate in Cambridge, would show that there was a far closer connection between them and their University at the present time than there ever was in days gone by. The facility which persons living in the country had of obtaining information as to what went on in their University, and the great intimacy that was kept between those remaining in the University and those resident in the country made University men a far more close and united body than they ever were in times gone by. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets said it was a bad thing to bring politics into the Universities, because it caused a great amount of discord amongst the teachers. He (Mr. Staveley Hill) had been a Fellow of his College for a great many years; he had lived in Oxford, and seen a great deal of Oxford during those years; and, therefore, he was not a little surprised to hear the hon. and learned Member, whose opinions the House much respected, say that the introduction of political questions was a great element of discord. In the common room, no doubt, there were political differences; but those differences did not affect the teaching of the Universities. The members of the teaching Body of the University were not so weak as that; they could teach and make their teaching useful, whether they were of one side of politics or of the other. He would only venture to draw attention to a few of the words which were omitted by his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow University (Mr. J. A. Campbell), when he quoted the

original Charter to the Universities. He did that because it seemed to him that the words of James I., as quoted by *Blackstone*, were well worth considering, and formed in themselves an argument in favour of University representation. The University was ordered—

"To send two of their own Body to serve for those students who, though useful members of the community, were neither concerned in the landed nor in the trading interests, and to protect in the Legislature the rights of the Republic of Letters."

Just as much now as in the old days, there were numbers of men who were not concerned in the landed, or the trading interests, but who had a deep interest in the community of Letters, men who were living at or away from Oxford, amongst hundreds and thousands of persons who were looking to them for an example. If there was to be class representation at all, he failed to find any class in the community who were more deserving of representation than the class of persons constituting the elective Bodies for the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS said, he did not suppose that any Member of the House would entertain any doubt as to the service the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope) had done to Letters generally, and a thousand other good objects. He had also not the smallest doubt that the House thoroughly acknowledged the extraordinary services rendered to science by his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair); but that was not the question at present before the Committee. He failed to see, in the lengthy account his right hon. Friend (Sir Lyon Playfair) gave of the services that were done to Letters by foreign Governments, any relevance to the subject. He was aware that this was, in more senses than one, an academical discussion; and that the conclusion was a foregone one. It was, he supposed, necessary, in consequence of the understanding which had been entered into between the two Front Benches, that this most anomalous part of our representative system should be maintained. He should not, therefore, have got up to say anything on this subject—believing that the proposal of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Bryce) was only a barren protest against what he (Mr. Rogers) believed was mischievous—if he had not something to say about his own experience. He had lived for 40 years in Oxford—since he took his degree he had lived there uninterruptedly. He had had an opportunity of watching the whole course of academical business, and he had taken no small part in the business of the University. He even took no small part in the business now, for he had the honour to be the largest holder of unpaid offices in the University. He was going down to-morrow to discharge the duties of two of his offices. What he complained of was the mischievous effect of political squabbles on the internal life of the University. For years past there had not been an election for a single academical office, into which the most mischievous and demoralizing wirepullers had not thrust their noses; and offices were not given to persons because of their competence to fill them, but because of their partizanship. All this had entirely come out of the mischievous representation of the University. The different posts of the University were looked upon as so many places for the majority of Convocation, and that was members of the Conservative Party. The enfranchisement of the Universities had been confirmed by divers Acts of Parliament; but it was most important to remember that, at the time the franchise was originally given, a great majority of the members of the University held what were called spiritual estates—namely, the estates of clergymen, though they might be laymen. They were, therefore, only represented in Convocation; and one of the motives in giving the franchise was that property in the University should be represented. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Beresford Hope) had mentioned some of the distinguished men who had been returned by the Cambridge University. There were not very many—10 fingers would be quite sufficient to count them; and, similarly, it would not be difficult to count the distinguished men who had represented the Oxford University. Certainly, one of the men who represented Oxford University was, perhaps, the most infamous person who ever sat in the House of Commons—he meant Speaker Finch. The less said of Selden the better; but these were antiquarian con-

siderations, which he admitted were of little moment now. The real question was, whether this representation of the Republic of Letters, as it was called, did any good for the Republic of Letters. He did not think it did any good. He thought it degraded, and demoralized, and opened these seats of learning to Party conflicts, and to a perpetual system of Party preparation. In the next place, he did not believe it was expedient that there should be anomalous or double franchises created by Parliament. He was aware that this franchise was to be maintained. He knew very well that the understanding between the two Front Benches was not likely to be disturbed, whatever might be the remonstrances or opinions of hon. Gentlemen on the subject. But it was not unlikely that Members of the House would remember and talk about the matter, and that they would not fail to tell the country to whom it was they owed the retention of this kind of franchise. He would not say it was certain; but, perhaps, when a new Parliament was elected, this, with other mischievous retentions in this Redistribution Bill, would be swept into the limbo of past defects, and they would wonder that any person, except James I., was so foolish as to give such representation, and that any persons, except the Parliament of the year 1886, or thereabouts, were so unwise as to maintain it.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he need not address the Committee at any length; but as some things had been stated by the assailants of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, which certainly did apply to the University of Dublin, he would like to take an immediate opportunity of setting his own constituency right. He must say that, during the whole of this debate, the arguments that had been brought forward for the great change proposed by the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) had been utterly inadequate — he could hardly say they were serious arguments—when they came to consider what the change was that it was proposed in this offhand way to make. Now, for the first time since Universities obtained their right to send Members to Parliament, was that right impugned or challenged. For more than two and a-half centuries the old Universities of England and the University of Dublin had continuously sent Members to the House of Commons. Not only was that the case; but, in more recent times, on every occasion when the representation of the country was reviewed and reformed, so far from any attack being made on the principle of the Parliamentary representation of the Universities, the principle of that representation was sanctioned and further developed. For instance, in the great Reform Bill of 1832, the University of Dublin, which, since the Act of Union, had been deprived of one of its Members, had that Member restored; and, when Parliament came again in 1867 to consider the representation of the country, so far from any attack being made upon the representation of the Universities, nine Members instead of six were given to the Universities, for it was so late as 1867 that the Member for the University of London and the Members for the Scotch Universities were added to the House of Commons. Therefore, he maintained that all precedent, all teaching of history, all the decisions of previous Parliaments were in favour of the representation of the Universities in the House of Commons, and, until to-night, as far as he had been able to find out, the principle of that representation had never been seriously challenged. Now, let them consider what were the arguments which had been brought forward for this great change. He submitted they were wholly inadequate; they were of a most hypothetical nature; they were of a most unsubstantial character. What was the first argument? Why, that the Parliamentary contests created a pernicious excitement within the Universities, an excitement which overthrew the ordinary tranquil course of University life. It was said that the Members for Universities were elected by a caucus vote. In the University of Dublin such a thing had never been dreamt of. He knew the University of Dublin perfectly well; and when hon. Members said that only a Professor or a Fellow of the University should represent the constituency, he took issue with them at once. He attended his University as much as any member of it. He was constantly going in and out of the University, and he knew every bit of the University of Dublin quite as well as the hon. and

learned Member for the Tower Hamlets knew the life of his own University. It was absurd to say that they who did not happen to be Professors were unable to represent the wants and wishes of the University. All the arguments he had heard advanced in support of the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets appeared to him to divide themselves into two classes. One of those classes contained various criticisms upon the kind of Gentlemen who were returned by Universities to Parliament. It was very easy to make a general imputation that the sitting Members were not fit persons to represent Universities, and that, after all, they did not contribute much more than the Representatives of any other body to the advantage of the country. He (Mr. Plunket) was not going to speak of himself, especially after the far too flattering way in which the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Albert Grey) referred to him personally. But who were the Members who, at present, represented Universities in the House of Commons? Almost every one of them was either an ex-Minister, or privy councillor, one who, by his character and antecedents, had a right to sit on one of the Front Benches of the House; and several of them had actually been selected by the House itself to occupy the Chair of the Chairman of Ways and Means, or to preside over the Private Business of the House, because the House had the greatest confidence in their ability to direct its proceedings. Really, until the debate that evening, the only argument he ever heard advanced against University representation came from hon. Gentlemen who said—"Yes, they may be very distinguished persons, and useful persons in the House of Commons, but they are not exactly the kind of people we want." It was said that Universities should be represented by Professors, and that the men returned did not smell of midnight oil, or the must of the old library. Hon. Members opposite gave different definitions of the kind of men University Members ought to be; but what he observed as curious was, that when a Professor described what the Representative should be like, the description was a faithful photograph of the Professor himself. The great complaint of certain hon. Gentlemen was, that some persons were not University Members instead of those who were. He would put one question to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets. Suppose a majority of the electors of the University of Oxford were as the electors of one of the Scotch Universities and of the University of London were, sympathizers with the hon. and learned Gentleman's political views, and they had pitched upon him—and they could not have pitched upon a more distinguished scholar—would he have declined to accept the representation, and, if he had accepted it, would he have been found to-night proposing to extinguish University constituencies altogether? He (Mr. Plunket) would pass away from that and come to the real question. What were the serious arguments that were brought against University representation? The two arguments he had been dealing with could hardly have been seriously advanced, because there was nothing at all substantial in them. The serious argument was, that the seats could not be spared, as they were wanted so badly for other places. Did hon. Gentlemen grudge the Universities nine Members out of the 670? In the first place, it had been said that the Members returned did not represent the living Universities of the present day. He claimed that they did represent a living University. He, himself, claimed to represent the living University of Dublin as distinctly as any Professor or Fellow who could be chosen. There were men far more eminent and able than himself; but, so far as knowledge of the institution, and so far as sympathy with everything which went on in the University, his heart beat with every throb of University life. But the Members for the Universities did not only represent the living Universities. In the present state of affairs, when the great learned Professions had no separate representation in the House of Commons, it was of great advantage to the State that those classes should find representation through the Members for the Universities. He was not at all sure that in the University of Dublin the clergy were now the majority of the constituency, because he knew that, for some time, the voters who were not clergymen had been rapidly increasing in number; but he claimed to represent in Parliament not only the clergy of the Protestant Church, but the great

Professions of Law, of Medicine, and of Engineering. He did not mean to say that every lawyer, and doctor, and engineer in Ireland were his constituents; but he maintained that the vast majority were, and he asked, if they did not get direct representation through him, where were they to get it? If that was necessary in former times, when the constituencies were less democratic, and smaller than they were now, what would be the case in future? How were the members of the great Professions to find representation, when they were scattered about in constituencies of 50,000 people each? Why, the thing was quite absurd. It would only be by the merest accident that they would have any substantial weight. If they got the ear of their Member of Parliament, it would be by the goodwill of that Gentleman, and not from any special claim they would have upon him. Therefore, he said, University representation was requisite, in order that the views not only of the living Universities, but of those members of Universities who were now most learned in the different Professions should be put forward in the House. He did not stop there. He contended that what was referred to as the Republic of Letters was as nearly reached by the representation of the graduates as it was possible to reach it. He did not care a pin whether they drew the line at M.A. or B.A.; but he contended that the graduates of the Universities were as good a body of electors for the purpose of representing the great Republic of Letters as could be found. He was very unwilling to detain the Committee longer; but, perhaps, he might be allowed to say another word with regard to the constituency which he had the honour to represent. It had been charged against Universities that they sold their degrees in some way or other, and that the sale was in some way connected with the right to vote. He did not know what the case was at Oxford or Cambridge; but whatever the charge was, it did not apply to the University of Dublin, for every man who took the degree of M.A. was entitled to be placed on the Register without any fee or payment, annual or otherwise. A man was put on the Register without his even making a claim, so that the charge which had been made in no way concerned the University of Dublin. He wished, further, to say that he had never heard any opinion expressed by any Party whatever that the representation of the University of Dublin should cease on other than political grounds. A statement was made in the House the other night to the effect that it was distasteful to the so-called National Party in Ireland that there should be Members in the House obstructing their cause. Now, he had no wish to reopen the somewhat heated controversy which took place in the early portion of the evening; but when they were asked to abolish the representation of the Dublin University, because the Members returned ran counter to what was called the Nationalist Party, he was entitled to say that outside of Ulster there were 304,227 Protestants.

MR. SEXTON: They have increased 100,000 since the right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke some little while ago.

MR. PLUNKET said, he corrected himself at the time. There was no doubt of the matter; the number of Protestants in Ireland outside of Ulster was 304,227. Well, according to the mere numerical calculation, these people were entitled to six Members. They were, however, scattered amongst the multitudes of Catholics, and, therefore, their voices would be, practically, silent in the House. He just asked this question, and asked it frankly—under these circumstances, could anyone allege that the two Members allotted to Dublin University too many to represent in this House the wishes of the scattered Loyalists?

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he did not rise to discuss the general question; he simply wished to offer one or two observations with reference to some misleading remarks which had been made in the course of the debate in regard to the University which he had the honour to represent. His hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Bryce), in bringing the subject before the Committee, had referred to the University of London as being a merely examining University; and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Southwark (Mr. Rogers) had expressed the same idea more tersely and more forcibly. He (Sir John Lubbock), however, would be able to show, in a very few words, that this statement was calculated to convey a wrong impression, and that he ought not to pass it altogether without

notice. In Oxford and Cambridge Universities instruction was mainly given not by the University, but by the Colleges. When the University of London was founded, University College, London, stood in the same position in regard to the University as University College, Oxford, stood in in regard to the University of Oxford. But there were persons who were anxious to receive degrees without the necessity of going through a course of College residence; they brought their case before the Government, and it was considered that it would be a great advantage to have some Body which should give degrees without requiring residence. The University of London undertook the duty, and had discharged it to the best of its ability; and those who were conversant with the facts would, he believed, agree that this had been of great advantage to the country. One other remark he had to make in reference to an observation which had fallen from an hon. Member as to Members not representing their own Universities, and not being interested in their Universities. The right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Plunket) had commented on this statement as regards himself; and he (Sir John Lubbock), for his own part, would merely say that he had been a member of the Senate of the University of London for 20 years, and for eight years had been its Vice Chancellor. Though that University could, no doubt, have sent an abler Representative to the House than himself, it could not have sent one who took more interest in it, or in the work it was performing.

Mr. HICKS said, he did not wish to trouble the Committee with more than a single remark. As one of the class which had been spoken of in such contemptuous terms by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Davey), he wished to say he was prepared to leave this discussion entirely in the hands of those who were more intimately connected with the Universities than he was; but with regard to the extraordinary speech of the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke)—a speech which he (Mr. Hicks) was sorry to say had been addressed to a very empty House, and had not been heard either by the right hon. Gentleman at the head of Her Majesty's Government, or by the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote), but which, no doubt, by this time, had been fully communicated to them—he desired to ask whether the Prime Minister intended to offer any explanation of it? What did this extraordinary apparent want of agreement between the right hon. Baronet and the other Members of the Government mean? As an independent Member, he (Mr. Hicks) must protest against the attitude assumed by the right hon. Baronet. They had heard a great deal about a compromise and agreement between the two Front Benches, and about the Redistribution Bill having been brought in in consequence of that agreement. The measure had been passed through its earlier stages almost without a word of discussion; and now they were told that, when it was finally disposed, of there was an end to the compromise and agreement as to its provisions. ["No, no!"] He heard cries of "No!" but the right hon. Baronet at the head of the Local Government Board told them distinctly in his speech that, the moment the Bill was disposed of, he was open to consider any Resolution or proposal to alter it. It was to be regretted that there were so few Members in the House at the time; but he trusted that the right hon. Baronet's speech would be fully reported in the Press, that it would be read, and that when the Bill came again before the Committee, the House would be prepared to take it into its own hands, and to deal with it in a calm and impartial spirit, clause by clause. He trusted that the debate would not be brought to a close without Her Majesty's Government explaining how far they agreed with the views which had been expressed by the right hon. Baronet, and which had been endorsed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt).

Mr. WEBSTER said, he should like, before this debate closed, to say a few words on the subject of Scottish University representation. He had been so long connected with one of the Universities that he could speak with some experience and knowledge of the working of all of them; and, from long observation of what occurred in them in regard to Parliamentary Elections, he thought he could reasonably give an opinion upon

that subject also. All his experience and observation had led him, very reluctantly, to the conclusion that the system of giving to the four Universities in Scotland 1-30th of the whole representation of Scotland was utterly indefensible. He would remind the Committee that this system of academical franchise had no hold on the past history of Scotland. There were none of the associations, none of the recollections which had, no doubt, hallowed this system in the case of the English and Irish Universities. It had its rise only in 1868, when it was introduced, for the first time, into the system of Parliamentary Elections in Scotland on the express ground—he thought he quoted the exact words of Mr. Disraeli—

"That it would insure the presence in this House of men eminent for their knowledge and qualifications in learning, literature, and science, and would enable them more properly to do justice to those subjects in this House."

Then, on the same lines, his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair), who did honour to that University, had given an exposition of his own views as to what a University Member ought to be. One of the conditions was, that there should be an absence of Party politics and Party feeling, and that the Member should be a man chosen as eminent in knowledge of higher education, and should devote himself in the House to the interests and promotion of education. Well, all this was very fine in theory; but how did the system operate in practice? He had risen to-night to state that he knew that it was utterly untrue. No such thing existed in the practice of Parliamentary Elections. With regard to the University of Aberdeen, of the Governing Body of which he had long been a member, he might fairly say that the election there had turned entirely upon Party politics; and, with regard to the University of Edinburgh, the right hon. Gentleman who represented it had, it was true, every qualification that could enable him to serve it, and do honour to it; but could it be said that he had been elected with a view to his possession of those qualities? The very reverse was the case. His election, in 1880, went upon purely Party lines. He was returned by the narrowest majority. His eminence then was all that it is now, and his opponent was a man whose name at this moment he (Mr. Webster) did not suppose anybody in the House remembered, and yet that gentleman had polled only 74 votes less than the right hon. Member. It was the practice on the opposite side, as well as on this side of the House, to speak with pride of the right hon. Gentleman; but how were they (the Opposition) going to treat him at the next Election? Why, he was to be opposed as violently as on the last occasion. Was his opponent a man distinguished, whether in letters or in science? No. He was a lawyer of ability, no doubt, in his own Profession, but with no pretence to the possession of those qualities which the right hon. Gentleman had himself told them should, in theory, distinguish the Representatives of those Universities. The truth was, that these Universities, in place of being, as the right hon. Gentleman who represented the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope) had said, centres of culture and high thinking, were strongholds of narrow class and sectarian feeling. Let them take the strongest case possible. It was part of the duty of the Council of Graduates, who choose Parliamentary Representatives, also to elect representatives from their own Body to the government of the University. At a recent contest in the University of Aberdeen Dr. Bain, whom everybody knew to be the very man to be a member of the University Council, who had been a Professor in the University, and had great knowledge of both higher and secondary education, was rejected by a very large majority in the election of a representative in the Governing Body of the University. He cited that case as an illustration, and submitted that the elections in Scottish Universities, in place of being governed by a regard for those qualifications of Members, which ought to be the real consideration, were governed entirely by what, in their case, he must call wretched Party politics.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: After the very interesting and able speeches which we have heard from the Representatives of the different Universities who have seats in this House, I think it quite unnecessary for me to enter into the general discussion. I rise for the purpose of saying a few words upon a subject which has been already referred

to—namely, a speech which I understand was made by the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke). I had not the advantage of hearing that speech; but I am quite aware that the opinions of the right hon. Baronet—and the House is quite aware too—that his opinions upon many questions, and upon this amongst others, differ from those of the Party who sit on this side of the House, and, I am happy to think, from those of many who sit on his own side of the House. As I have said, I, unfortunately, did not hear his speech; but I understand that what he did was to say that it was impossible for him to support or accept the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce), though, at the same time, he reserved to himself on any future occasion the right to take a different course. Whenever that time comes the right hon. Baronet will find, in the Conservative Party, his steadiest and firmest opponents; and we shall be quite prepared to argue the question on the lines fully before us, and to do our best to show that the right hon. Baronet is in the wrong. But what I understand at present to be the feeling of the right hon. Baronet is that disfranchising the Universities lies altogether outside the scope of the present Bill; and that it is on that account that he is ready to adhere to the understanding which exists on the subject of this Bill, and to resist the proposal of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets. But I think that, irrespective of the merits of the case, it is an irrefutable argument against the proposal that the Bill was introduced under peculiar circumstances. I do not mean with reference to any understanding between the different Parties in the House; but I allude, if you like, to the character and circumstances of the Bill, and to the circumstances of its introduction, and to what it is intended to do, and that it is not within its scope to deal with the question of disfranchisement. Let me ask the Committee for a moment to consider what it is that this Bill proposes to do. The House has already passed an Act largely extending the franchise of these Kingdoms; and in order to accommodate that extension to the circumstances of the country, it is necessary that there should be an extensive redistribution of seats. This Bill has, therefore, been brought in for the express purpose of so redistributing them, and to give fair and proper expression to the great extension of the franchise which was passed last year. There is, or there ought to be, nothing disfranchising about it. It has been pointed out several times that this Bill and the previous one, taking the two measures together, are intended to disfranchise no one; but if we were to take away representation from the Universities, we should disfranchise a number, perhaps a considerable number, of persons. There is no reason whatever why you should introduce into a measure intended for one purpose that which is totally at variance with it. Moreover, let me ask the Committee to consider whether this is the proper time when we ought to attempt to reduce the representation of learning in this House. Remember what you are doing. You are enormously increasing the power of the numerical majority; you are seriously increasing the representation of mere numbers. Ought you not to have some kind of reservation, if only a small one—some kind of counterbalance? Do you not see the importance of preserving some kind of counterbalancing force—however slight—against the power of mere numbers? Property, to a certain extent, under any system, will find a way of obtaining some amount of representation; but this is a question of the representation of learning—of doing, through the Universities, what, undoubtedly, is not done by any other portion of our representation—and providing that which otherwise would not be provided for. At the same time, without going into the great argument which has been so well illustrated by my hon. and right hon. Friends on both sides of the House who represent Universities, we have sufficient ground on which to stand, and I hope the Committee will refuse to accept the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman.

MR. GLADSTONE: Though the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) has only detained the Committee for a very few moments, I shall be still shorter in my observations. I wish, without making any particular reference to the closing sentences of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, to express my concurrence with what I take to be his main argument. The right hon. Baronet,

without having heard the speech of my right hon. Friend (Sir Charles W. Dilke), accepts the position taken up by my right hon. Friend, who endeavoured to urge upon the Committee, as I should myself be respectfully disposed to do, that this question is not one which can, consistently with the general figure of the work we have before us, be dealt with in the course of the present Bill. The two measures — namely, that for the franchise and that dealing with the areas—might, as the right hon. Baronet said, undoubtedly be considered from one point of view as one measure; but, at the same time, although they are two parts of one great subject, yet the Government has kept them rigidly and entirely separate and distinct. The one we are now dealing with relates entirely to the distribution into areas of the constituencies provided for the country; and the other determines who is a "capable citizen" to exercise the franchise—to use a phrase which has been used by others as well as myself. We determined what was a "capable citizen" in dealing with the franchise. We are not now concerned with the question of the "capable citizen," but with the question of the areas into which the constituency is to be divided; and, undoubtedly, it is true, as has been urged by the right hon. Gentleman, that if we were to accept the proposition of my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Bryce) we should introduce into this plan an element which it does not contain, except in the rarest instances, and accidentally, perhaps, we might discover it; but, in principle, the Bill may fairly be said to exclude everything in the nature of disfranchisement. On the general question I do not venture to give an opinion, as it is one which, when it is brought forward, will require very mature consideration. I do not venture to convey an intimation as to the course I should myself take. My position is a rather peculiar one. I represented a great University for a longer time than it is usual for it to be represented, and was so unfortunate as finally to lose its favour, though I must say not until I had greatly tried its patience, and not until I had received from it many striking marks of favour and indulgence. I do not, therefore, hold out any engagement of any kind with respect to my own course outside of this Bill; but I confidently put it to the Committee, that the Government is making no undue compromise of its principles in holding that in this Bill, which has nothing to do with the question of franchise — indeed, I will go further and say, in this plan which does not embrace any element of disfranchisement—the occupants of this Bench will certainly, on this occasion, give their vote cordially, and go into the same Lobby with the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and will decline to support any proposal for the destruction of the representation of the Universities in this measure, which I hope will shortly be passed into law.

Mr. HEALY said, he had continually noticed that the method pursued by the Government in dealing with questions brought before the House was to argue "Not now, but some other time." They said—"We do not say that what you propose is not very admirable; but what we contend is that this is not the proper season, and if you will only bring the subject on some Sunday in next week, or next month, or next year, we will take your admirable plan into our most indulgent consideration." He (Mr. Healy) would tell hon. Gentlemen interested in this subject, however, that this was a case of "now or never." Either the Government or the House must deal with it now, or they would never get a grip of it again. They had now got these Universities in their power, and his advice was—"Cut their throats." Kill them now; for, if they had another chance, it would be giving them a fresh lease of life. Therefore, for right hon. Gentlemen to say that they confined themselves to nothing, that they made no pledge, and that some day, in some future generation, if they were spared—as he trusted the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would long be—they would come forward and lend this subject the magic influence of their name, amounted to nothing. The present Government might fall next week, or the week after, or any day, then they would have the opposite Party in power, and no chance of a question like this being dealt with. Hon. Gentlemen opposite should not be deluded by statements such as those of the Prime Minister. If they thought they had a chance of doing this University system a mischief, now was the time to hurt it. As to what had fallen from

the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin Mr. Plunkett, it was contended that there were in Ireland above 300,000 loyal Irish Protestants who would not be represented in the slightest degree if it were not for the Members for the Dublin University; what did that amount to? Why, it amounted to this—that, in the Irish Provinces, no one had any feeling other than that of a Nationalist—"Oh, oh!"—he meant for Parliamentary purposes. The Loyalists in the three Southern Provinces of Ireland could not get a single man to represent them except the right hon. and learned Members for Dublin University; and, because that was so, therefore Parliament must invent a fancy franchise. If the Loyalists could not get a Representative in Ireland in the ordinary way, then, logically, let them do without it. There was no reason why a loyal minority should have a fancy franchise invented for it. There appeared to him to be every reason why these fancy franchises should be cut off altogether. The door should either be open or shut. If the loyal minority were entitled to representation in Ireland, let them have it; but if, by reason of their number, they were not, then let them be without it. There was no reason in the world why because a man, by a grinding process, went through a series of preliminary preparation to-day, which he would not be able to do perhaps next year, if he were tested, that, therefore, he should have a right in perpetuity to vote for Members of Parliament. If the most loyal Catholic—a Catholic who would grovel in the dust before the name of Royalty—were to offer himself for election at Dublin University, they would set the dogs at him. It was not loyalty that this constituency wanted, it was ascendency; but, of course, it was only natural for Englishmen to be galled on this point. This House was entering upon a democratic course. It might be right or it might be wrong. He Mr Healy would say—"Let us go on fairly and squarely. If you are going to trust the people, trust them all through, and do not fall back upon such a system as this." What did the University electors do when they had a chance of distinguishing themselves? Why, they put out the right hon. Gentleman who was now First Lord of the Treasury, and who was the most distinguished man who had appeared in Europe for, perhaps, a century. That right hon. Gentleman was Member for a University, and they turned him out. And for whom? He Mr. Healy did not intend to make any invidious comparisons; but was there any Gentleman in that House at the present time who could be compared with the right hon. Gentleman the First Minister of the Crown? Yet that was the result of the University franchise. He would ask those who believed in the University constituencies to consider what those constituencies had done in the past—to remember that the most distinguished men who had been brought forward had got the kick out and the go-by, unless they were prepared to give way to the influence of these wretched little centres. He would ask the Committee whether they were prepared to trust these wretched University Dons; or whether they would not rather trust the broad masses of the people, who might be wrong sometimes, yet who, in the main, he would venture to say, were always in the right?

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND, who spoke amidst considerable interruption, assured the Committee that if he could only believe that the groan which arose simultaneously with himself was a groan against the monstrosity of University representation, he should be very glad indeed that that groan had been heard. However, he did not intend to detain the Committee for any length of time; and, therefore, he hoped that Radical Members opposite would not give vent to their unpleasant habit of groaning, in which they indulged whenever an Irish Member rose to speak from an Irish point of view. There could be no doubt whatever that it was a very extreme injustice indeed that the Universities should have special Parliamentary representation. The University of Dublin was an institution which was opposed to every aspiration, national and religious, of the great majority of the people of Ireland; and he did not believe the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen who represented the University of Dublin to-day Mr. Gibson and Mr Plunkett would be able, if they were thrown out of that constituency, to find another constituency in any part of Ireland at all. In a few counties in the North, those right hon. and learned Gentlemen

might possibly get elected; but, as his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had pointed out, the great majority of the people in the other three Provinces of Ireland were extremely national, and the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen to whom he referred could not possibly get a seat in any of those Provinces. It was, then, a monstrous injustice that they should be allowed to have seats as Representatives of the University of Dublin. The first principle of Parliamentary representation was, that Members returned to represent a particular part of the country should be voted for by a large number of the people of that part or the country, and should represent the wishes of a great number of those people. But he would venture to say that the right hon. and learned Gentlemen the Members for the University of Dublin did not represent the wishes of even one-fourth of the people of Ireland; and it was monstrously unjust that a handful of men belonging to that University should have the same political privileges as constituencies containing thousands and thousands of people. He was entirely opposed to the principle of University representation. If it was argued that the Universities should have Members of their own because they were learned Bodies—if the graduates were to have a right to the franchise simply because they possessed so much learning—then he did not see why a right to the franchise should not be given to other people simply because they possessed so much property. Neither property nor learning ought, in his opinion, to have any weight in the matter. ["Hear, hear!"] He was very glad to hear Conservative Members cheering that sentiment. He did not think that because a few hundreds of specially learned men were brought together in a University, that was any reason why they should have the same privileges given to them as were only given to their fellow-countrymen when congregated in thousands; and he believed that the average electors of any constituency were quite as rightly and as well-qualified to vote as those gentlemen who returned the Members for the University of Dublin. ["Oh, oh!"] As the Committee appeared to be very anxious not to give him a hearing, and as he had been subjected to continual interruption since he rose to give his opinion, he should conclude by moving that the Chairman be directed to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. William Redmond.*)

MR. PARNELL said, he wished to appeal to the Prime Minister to allow this Motion to pass. He supposed it was not a very popular Motion to make at that time of night (10 minutes past 12 o'clock); but it must be perfectly evident, from the reception which had just been given to his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. William Redmond), that it was quite impossible for the Irish Members to present their aspect of the case involved in the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) with any probability of getting any sort of a hearing. The question of the representation of Dublin University had been very slightly touched upon, although it had been very efficiently opened by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for that University. It was a matter of very considerable importance. The Irish Members, or many of them, certainly objected very strongly, however they might feel regarding the general question of the representation of such Universities—such real Universities—as those of Oxford and Cambridge, they objected very strongly indeed to the representation of the University which was supposed to be the University of Ireland, but which was really only the University of a very small section of the Irish people. Whatever claim might have been made out by the supporters of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the Irish Members certainly did not consider that either the Government or the supporters of the University of Dublin had, so far as the debate had yet gone, made out any satisfactory claim for the representation of that University. The question of the representation of the University of Dublin had not been at all adequately dealt with so far, nor had any good claim been established by those gentlemen who might be supposed to be the supporters and upholders of the maintenance of the representation of the University of Dublin. He, therefore, re-

spectfully submitted that if this question were not to be raised later on—and it could not be conveniently raised later on, because then it could only be raised on the Schedules—the Irish Members should be allowed an opportunity of placing their views upon it before the Committee, and of discussing the maintenance of the separate representation of the University of Dublin with the same freedom with which, during the whole of this evening, there had been discussed the merits of the maintenance of the separate representation of the English Universities. So far, the question of Irish University representation had hardly entered into the case, except under the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin. Grave and weighty considerations of policy, justice, and expediency were underlying this question of the maintenance of the Dublin University; and he had yet to learn that the English House of Commons intended to refuse to the Irish Members the right of putting their views upon this all-important question before them. He did not know any matter that was of more importance in regard to the question of the educational interests of Ireland than this same question of the representation of the University of Dublin. Of course, he was not allowed, under the Rules which regulated the proceedings of the Committee, to enter at this moment into the merits of the question; but, certainly, he himself, and many of his Friends, would be desirous of laying their opinions before the Committee. All he could say, in conclusion, was that he did not desire to interfere with the convenience of the Committee in coming to a decision upon the particular question which had been occupying their attention, and which had been debated for many hours that evening—namely, the question of the English Universities. But he could not see, at the present moment, any way in which the Irish Members could reconcile their own duty in this matter with the convenience of the Committee—that was to say, he could not see how, if a division were taken on the Amendment which had been proposed from the Chair, his Friends and himself could raise the subject anew in any form which would be of the slightest practical use. As he had said a few moments ago, they would have to wait until the Schedules of the Bill were reached; and then, of course, as they all knew, when that period came, it would be impossible to raise any discussion such as they desired to raise. They would be told that the matter had been finally closed in the discussion on the clauses, and they would be hustled out of the way. If the Government could show that there was any reasonable method by which the question could be raised again, he and his Friends would not desire to raise the Irish branch of the subject while the debate on the English branch was going on. They did not desire to obtrude themselves now; but they did desire to have an opportunity of thrashing this matter out. They were very willing to be the last served in these matters, as the history of the proceedings of the House of Commons had already proved; and if the Government could point out any way in which the Irish Members could yield to the convenience of the Committee now, and allow the immediate question before the Committee to go to a division, while, at the same time, they retained the right to raise again that part of the question in which they were specially interested, he could only say that he and his hon. Friends, on whose behalf he spoke, would be most happy to adopt it. They felt that the University of Dublin, however it might have succeeded as a higher educational establishment for a section of the Irish people, had undoubtedly failed as a national institution; and that the question was one of so much importance that they could not, with the slightest regard for their own position, and for their duty to their countrymen, avoid attracting to it that attention in that House which its importance demanded.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am sorry I cannot meet the appeal of the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken (Mr. Parnell). The hon. Member who made this Motion for reporting Progress (Mr. William Redmond) complained of the reception which he met with from the Committee. Well, Sir, that hon. Member has not lived so many years in this world as I have; but, as he gathers experience, he will find that mankind are apt to become indifferent to favours, and appreciate them less in proportion as they are profusely bestowed upon them. ["Hear, hear!"] The favours of the hon. Gen-

tleman have been bestowed, even in the course of the present evening, with such liberality and bounty upon this House, that I admit that in some portion of the House there is not that high estimate formed of them which unquestionably ought to prevail. I am quite certain, however, that that does not indicate any indisposition on the part of the Committee to discuss this question. The hon. Member for the City of Cork has said that we have been spending the evening in discussing the case of the English Universities. I am quite sure the hon. Gentleman has not heard the debate, or he would hardly have made that statement. It has been a very interesting debate, not on English Universities, but on the principle of University representation. The hon. Member says, however—and here I am wholly at one with him—that the case of the University of Dublin is, in some respects, unique. I am certain that if the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), who rose to offer some remarks on a collateral issue, had thought fit to make them upon the University of Dublin, he would have been heard—I will not say with patience, for that would not do justice either to him or to the Committee—but with the utmost interest and attention, and were he to do so now, I am sure the same result would follow. If the hon. Member for the City of Cork himself (Mr. Parnell) is disposed at this hour to enter upon the question, I will answer for it that there is no doubt whatever that he, likewise, will be heard, I may say, to his heart's content; for the intelligence which he brings to bear upon such a subject, and the relevancy with which he always argues, put us in the most favourable state of mind to hear him. I hope that this Motion for reporting Progress will not be pressed, and that we may be permitted to proceed with the debate upon the subject.

Mr. SEXTON said, the Committee had lately been treated to many novelties, and the most startling of these was the method which the Prime Minister had taken of conducting the debates. Instead of allowing a Member to rise of his own motion and at his own discretion, according to the ideas in his mind, the Prime Minister, not satisfied with the New Rules and with the operation of Urgency, took upon himself the position of dictator of debate, and presumed that he had met the necessity of the case, and shown a due regard to the proper functions of the House, by calling upon one particular Member or another to address himself to the subject before the Committee. That was an arrangement which he (Mr. Sexton), for one, could not accept; for he thought the debate should be ordered and conducted according to the individual desire and intention of any hon. Member who took part in it. The Prime Minister, when he condescended to be jocose, which was not often, was as a rule intelligible; but perhaps it was owing to the dimness of his (Mr. Sexton's) understanding—[*Laughter*]—he confessed that he saw no great intellectual skill in taking advantage of an admission which a man was perfectly ready to make—but perhaps it was owing to the dimness of his understanding that the joke ventilated upon his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. William Redmond) by the right hon. Gentleman was unintelligible to his mind. It was no proof of its point that it should be applauded by the followers of the Prime Minister, who were equally ready with a due facility to worship the right hon. Gentleman's politics, or his wit. He (Mr. Sexton) was not aware that his hon. Friend had addressed to the Committee more than a few brief words that night; and he thought ungenial wit might well be spared from, if not the oldest, at least the most experienced Member of the House, to the youngest. As to the question before the Committee—this great question of the University representation of the three countries—it was only reached at the dinner hour, and had only occupied about three hours of the time of the Committee. Yet they were told that the subject had been adequately discussed. He was glad to say that when Sir Arthur Otway was in the Chair they never had the startling decisions upon adequacy of discussions which were sometimes given under other circumstances; but there had recently been decisions in that House on that point which left one in doubt as to what might be deemed, according to the ideas prevailing there of propriety and justice, the precise limits of adequate discussion. The Prime Minister had said that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) could not have heard the de-

bate, and that the debate had not been upon Irish, English, or Scotch University representation, but upon the principle of University representation as compared or contrasted with the ordinary Parliamentary representation of the general community. Now, he (Mr. Sexton) had sat in the House for some portion of the evening, and had heard the very eloquent speech of the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) on the particular claims of that institution. He had also heard a speech on the difference between the qualifications of voters in the Scotch and English Universities; and he had heard a proposal made which had quickened the risibility of the Prime Minister, that the graduate qualification should be extended to the whole body in Oxford and Cambridge, as in Scotland. If these were not matters concerning the comparative merits of the University system of representation in Ireland, England, and Scotland, he did not know what they were. The representation of the Prime Minister was not an accurate representation of the debate. The representation of Trinity College, Dublin, was peculiar. The Dublin University held a peculiar position towards politics and the public life of the community. The Irish Members who sat near him (Mr. Sexton) represented that section and part of public opinion in Ireland which was most entitled to be heard on the question of the University representation of the country, and a few words from two Members of the Party, rising at midnight in a jaded and unwilling House, did not represent as fully as was necessary the views which ought to be laid before the Committee. Under these circumstances, he appealed to the Prime Minister to give an opportunity of concluding the debate another night, for he was certain that in that way the time of the Committee would be saved.

MR. HEALY said, that as his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had pointed out, the Irish Members were in no sense whatever anxious to stand between the Committee and a division. All they desired to do was to save their right to debate the question of the Dublin University, either now or at some future time. Unfortunately, the enacting clause of the Bill with regard to this matter was the second; and it set forth that from and after the end of this present Parliament the Parliamentary boroughs named in the first part of the 1st Schedule should cease to return any Member. The hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) proposed to insert the words "and Universities." If the Committee allowed this opportunity to pass, it would not be possible afterwards to raise the question of the University of Dublin. He (Mr. Healy) would like to know from the Chair whether that view was or was not correct? He agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork that it was reasonable enough that the question of the Irish University should be separated from that of the English Universities. It was not wanted to raise them upon the same lines; and he would like to ask the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), or the Chairman of Ways and Means (Sir Arthur Otway), whether, if a division were now taken on the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, they would not be excluding all opportunity of raising the Dublin University question before the Report stage? Of course, he was aware that it could be raised on the Report stage; but what was wanted was to have the question discussed in Committee.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I believe that on the Order Paper there is a proposal to deal with the question of the Universities generally by a new clause, to be proposed, I think, by the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton.) I think that probably, Sir, you would rule that, if the question should include all Universities, it could not be raised again after a decision had been taken upon the point on which it is now proposed to divide the Committee; but I would suggest to the hon. Member who has just spoken, and also to the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), that that does not arise in the present case. If their Amendments are intended to be pointed solely to the University of Dublin—I am not to be understood as suggesting in any way that we should support or oppose such proposals; but for the information of hon. Members who may desire to raise the question, I would point out, and especially to the two hon. Members whom I have named,

that if they choose to propose a special clause affecting only the University of Dublin, they might do so, and their object would thus be gained. If that meets their views, they might allow the division to be taken on the general question, and reserve to themselves the opportunity of debating this particular point afterwards.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he preferred to have a ruling from the Chair on the point. He wished to know whether or no, after a division had been taken on the present Amendment, and that Amendment had been defeated, the Chairman would exclude any new clause which any hon. Member might desire to propose for disfranchising the University of Dublin.

Mr. BRYCE said, he wished to say a word on the point of Order before this question was answered. The Amendment which he had proposed was followed, later on, by an Amendment to the Schedule. In that Amendment to the Schedule he had put down the names of all the Universities. Of course, if the present Amendment were defeated he should not move the following one; but that Amendment would be equally in Order if it named only the English and Scotch Universities, and not the University of Dublin. It would be equally an Amendment properly following up the present Amendment. He submitted that, as the present Amendment spoke only of Universities in general, and did not imply that Dublin was to be one of the Universities disfranchised, so it would be perfectly open to hon. Members opposite to move a special clause in reference to the University of Dublin.

The CHAIRMAN: So far as I am able to form an opinion at this moment, I should consider the matter determined by the division to be taken now. It is obvious that if any hon. Member could raise the question in regard to the University of Dublin hereafter, it would be competent for him, or any other hon. Member, to raise it in regard to any of the other Universities. In my opinion, the question would be determined now, and could not be raised again in Committee.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he understood that in the opinion of the Chairman, if the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) be now rejected, it would not be competent for the Irish Members to raise again in Committee the question of the representation of the University of Dublin. In face of that decision, which, of course, he would not challenge, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister whether he remained of the same mind? To the Irish Members the question was of the gravest importance; and, in their opinion, it had not been adequately discussed. In the early portion of the evening some of his hon. Friends were able to show, to his mind at all events, that the Party they represented had been most unfairly treated by the Boundary Commissioners; and their feeling on that subject intensified their objection to the monopoly of University representation by the Members for the University of Dublin. There was not only the question whether Dublin University should continue to retain its Members, but the extended question was involved —namely, whether the University should retain its Members alone, or in conjunction with another University? That was a question of the very gravest importance.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is now going into the general question. The Question before the Committee is, "That I do report Progress."

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR assured the Chairman he had no intention to discuss the general question. He was only endeavouring to bring home to the mind of the Prime Minister the large number of grave issues which were involved in the discussion which the right hon. Gentleman wanted to close. As a matter of fact, there had only been three hours' debate, and but short speeches had been delivered to an impatient and tired Assembly by the Members of the Party chiefly interested. A more monstrous proposition than that of the Prime Minister had never been submitted to the House of Commons; and it would be the duty of the Irish Members to resist it to the utmost of their power.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that when he spoke a few minutes ago he was fully under the impression that it would be competent for hon. Members to raise the question, as it affected Ireland and the University of Dublin, on the Com-

mittee stage. He must, however, be wrong, as the Chairman had ruled the point the other way. He was far from saying that the matter should be left as it was; and though he was extremely sorry they could not divide on the general question now, he would, under the circumstances, consent to the Motion to report Progress.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Tuesday* next.

ELECTIONS IN COUNTIES (HOURS OF POLL) BILL.

Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Grey, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Cochran-Patrick.

[BILL 19.] CONSIDERATION.

Order for Consideration, as amended, read.

MR. HEALY said, he understood the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) intended to so amend the Bill that it would apply to the country at large. If that was the right hon. Gentleman's intention, it would be necessary to insert in Clause 1 some word which would include every constituency.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Healy) would see from the Paper that Amendments were put down to Clause 1, and that it was also intended to amend the title. He now proposed, after Clause 2, to insert the following Clause:—

(Repeal of 41 and 42 Vic. c. 4, and 47 and 48 Vic. c. 34.)

"Upon this Act coming into operation 'The Parliamentary Elections (Metropolis) Act, 1878,' and 'The Elections (Hours of Poll) Act, 1884,' shall be repealed, without prejudice to anything previously done in pursuance thereof."

Clause *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

MR. WHITLEY said, that since the Bill was last discussed, he had had the advantage of conferring with a large number of the electors of the city he had the honour to represent (Liverpool). The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) threw out the suggestion that if it was thought desirable to close the poll in the middle of the day for the convenience of the gentlemen engaged in taking the votes about 3 o'clock in the afternoon would be a very reasonable hour. It was felt in Liverpool that if the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman could be adopted it would prove a great relief to the Returning Officers and others associated with them on the election day.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, it was quite true he threw out the suggestion in reference to some remarks which had been made by an hon. Gentleman. He, however, expressed the opinion that it would be best to keep the poll open during the whole day. Surely it was possible for the polling officials to get refreshments while they were working. Of course, an election was a hard day's work; but then it was an exceptional occurrence.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Question, "That the Clause be added to the Bill," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. WARTON desired to propose a new clause.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Gentleman has not given Notice of the clause.

MR. WARTON: I gave Notice of it to Sir Arthur Otway.

MR. SPEAKER: The Notice was not sufficient to comply with the Rules of the House.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, it was his intention to propose that the Bill be re-committed for Thursday next. The hon. and learned Member (Mr. Warton) would then have an opportunity of moving his clause. Perhaps he would give Notice of it.

Clause 1 (Hours of polling in counties).

On the Motion of SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 5, after "every," insert "Parliamentary and every municipal."

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 5, leave out from "election," to "within," in line 6.—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. HEALY said, that if he might make a suggestion to the Government,

it would be to the effect that the better thing to do would be to leave out "within the meaning of the Act," then to leave the second Amendment, and insert instead of "every election," "the election for a University." They would then get rid of the Definition Clause, which seemed extremely awkward.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he did not think it would be well to vary the words, inasmuch as they followed the precedent of all the Acts relating to Parliamentary and municipal elections.

MR. HEALY asked, if the right hon. Baronet would consent to the Act extending to Town Commissioners?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, it was not possible for him to do so.

Question put, and *negatived*; words left out accordingly.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 2 (Definition).

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 10, leave out from "Act," to end of Clause, and insert,—"The expression 'Parliamentary election' means an election for a county, city, borough, place, or combination of counties, cities, boroughs, and places (not being any university or universities), which returns any Knight of the Shire or Member to serve in Parliament, and where the same is divided for the purpose of such return includes an election for such division;

"The expression 'municipal election' means an election of a councillor, Commissioner of Police, or auditor, or (in Ireland) an alderman in any municipal borough or in any ward thereof;

"The expression 'municipal borough' means,—

"As regards England, a borough subject to 'The Municipal Corporations Act, 1882;' and

"As regards Scotland, a burgh or town which has a town council or Police Commissioner; and

"As regards Ireland, a borough subject to the Act of the Session of the third and fourth years of the reign of Her present Majesty, chapter one hundred and eight, intituled 'An Act for the Regulation of Municipal Corporations in Ireland,' and the Acts amending the same."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. SMALL said, that at present the Bill would not apply to small towns. It was very desirable that they should receive the benefit of this legislation, and it could easily be given to them by inserting the words "town commissioners" after the word "councillor."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he could not agree on this occasion to put in any words of the kind suggested, because he would be putting in words of which he did not fully understand the meaning. He had always steadily resisted any dealing with Local Board elections in England in Municipal Acts. It was impossible to deal with Local Board elections satisfactorily until Local Government generally was dealt with. He could not speak definitely upon the Irish part of the question; but if the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Small) would raise the matter by Notice on the Paper for Thursday, he would endeavour to make himself acquainted with the facts.

MR. SEXTON said, that out of 80 towns in Ireland only 11 were incorporated under the Act of 1840. Some of the towns which were not incorporated were more important than some of those which were.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he should be glad if the hon. Gentleman would let him have the facts in writing.

MR. SEXTON said, he should be very glad to do so; and he would advise the right hon. Baronet to read the very able essay on Local Government in Ireland written by Mr. Richard O'Shaughnessy, the late Member for Limerick.

Question put, and *agreed to*; words inserted accordingly.

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Title.

Amendment proposed, to leave out in Title the words "elections in counties," and insert "and municipal elections."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Question, "That the words 'elections in counties' stand part of the Title," put, and *negatived*.

Question, "That the words 'and municipal elections' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to*.

Bill *re-committed* for *Thursday* next, and to be *printed*. [Bill 85.]

MOTION.

SHANNON NAVIGATION BILL.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on the Shannon Navigation Bill do consist of Nine Members:—The Committee was accordingly *nominated* of,—Mr. THOMAS LEA, Captain

O'Shea, Mr. Corry, Mr Dawson, Mr. Ewart, Mr. O'Sullivan, Mr. Kenny, Mr. O'Kelly, and Mr. Hibbert, with power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five to be the quorum.

House adjourned at One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 9th March, 1885.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Pensions * (38).

Third Reading—Ecclesiastical Commissioners * (17), and *passed*.

RAILWAY RATES AND TERMINALS.

MOTION FOR A PAPER.

Lord BENNIKER, in rising to call the attention of the House to the subject of Railway Rates, and to move for copy of the judgments of the Railway Commission with respect to terminals, said, it might be bold of him to bring such an important question before their Lordships, particularly as he had as great an objection to making or hearing long speeches as no doubt their Lordships had. However, he would endeavour to place what he had to say as shortly and clearly before the House as he could. He thought he need hardly dwell on the importance of this question both to agriculture and trade. The very fact of its being so warmly discussed by practical men was sufficient to show this; it would be enough for him to say that in some cases the facilities given by a railway in any particular locality might make or destroy an industry, and that it was acknowledged that, as they had been told, 1*d* per ton for rates and charges for a certain distance might make the whole difference between buyer and seller in a market. One word as to the appeal made to him by the Government to postpone his Notice. He might be taking some responsibility in not doing as he was asked, and he might be told hereafter that the negotiations with the Railway Companies had failed in consequence of his action. However, as he said the other day, he was not acting independently, although he was prepared to take the whole responsibility of what he said on himself. It would be wrong for him to pledge the able and experienced gentlemen who were acting with him by any blunders his own inferior experience and want of knowledge of the subject might lead him into. If the negotiations were to be carried on on lines which were entirely opposed to the general feeling of the country, it was far better that they should fail, for they would come to no good; and he thought he challenged the Government fairly when he said he would only withdraw if they would undertake that the negotiations should be carried on strictly on the basis that whatever was agreed upon should be dealt with in a measure brought in by the Government and not by private legislation. If there was one thing more than another on which traders were determined, it was that a great change in railway legislation should not be accomplished by Private Bills, and, as it were, by a side-wind. To negotiate on any other basis, therefore, was mere waste of time. If the negotiations failed, he thought the blame rested with the Government; for what possible object could there be in secrecy in domestic affairs of this kind? By such an appeal they were taken out of the region of a question in which both traders and Railway Companies were mutually interested, and where plain and open speaking was best, and conveyed into one of difficult and delicate negotiations with a Foreign Power. He could assure their Lordships, too, that it was very far from his desire, or that of those who acted with him, to say anything vindictive against the Railway Companies, for they knew full well how much they owed to them in many ways. All they wished to do was to obtain fair and just terms for those engaged in trade and agriculture, and he believed that if they did this it would be as much a gain to the Companies as to anyone else. The discussion on railway rates was not of recent origin. He remembered years ago being associated with others in the county in which he lived in a demand for lower rates, as he mentioned in that House last year. Lately this question had become one of much greater interest. He presided in January at a large and representative meeting in London of the Railway and Canal Traders' Association. This was followed by a meeting of the Birmingham Traders'

Association, by action all over the country of the Chambers of Agriculture affiliated to the Central Chamber, by the Corporation of London, by a large meeting at Manchester of Corporations representing a population of 1,681,235, and by Chambers of Commerce, who were all unanimous in their opinions on the subject. On this a Committee was formed of Members of their Lordships' House, of the House of Commons, and representatives of all branches of trade and agriculture. He was Chairman of this Committee, and what he desired to do was to place as well as he could their general opinion on the question before the House. He would only go back to the Committee of the House of Commons of 1881-2. The argument of the Railway Companies in favour of the changes they sought to make was based on the fact that they were following the recommendations of that Committee. No doubt, some of those recommendations were good; but the Railway interest was very strongly represented on the Committee, and he had heard one Member of the Committee say publicly that the representatives of railways were always found voting together, whereas the other Members of the Committee were not so cohesive and not so regular in attendance. He merely mentioned this, as under these circumstances the recommendations could hardly be taken as completely representing both sides of the question. One recommendation, in fact, was from the first condemned by traders, which was the proposal to allow railways to charge terminals outside their maximum rates. That was the chief point he wished to call their Lordships' attention to. The Government brought in a measure last year which contained many good provisions, and contained a clause dealing with terminals; but he must remark that, although the clause permitted the companies to make a reasonable charge for terminals beyond what was now, generally speaking, allowed, it not only provided for the sanction of the Railway Commissioners in case of dispute, but that, before such a charge could be made, the Railway Companies in question must provide a revised classification of rates and a revised schedule of maximum rates to be laid before Parliament and approved. That Bill came to nothing. Since that the power of Railway Companies to charge for terminals had been challenged, before the Railway Commission. Terminals were laid down in some Bills; but in the past these terminal charges had been, generally speaking, what are called "handling terminals," not a charge for stations and so on, and, as a rule, all such charges had been included in maximum rates. The Commissioners had decided against the Companies as to charges beyond the maximum rates. Mr. Price, one of the Commissioners, had stated that he considered Parliament always intended that terminals should be charged; but, surely, if so, the charge made must depend on the maximum rates, which should be carefully considered in coming to any conclusion, and he might have been influenced by the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons. However, the law was that, as a rule, maximum rates should include terminals—in fact, the Commissioners had made the Companies give information to traders as to what part of their rates was charged for terminals. What happened then? The Government encouraged a dealing with this question of principle by Private Bills. He had the authority of the noble Lord the Chairman of the Great Northern Railway (Lord Colville of Culross), who stated this in his speech the other day to the shareholders. Others had said the same, and he had spoken quite openly himself with an important official of a Railway Company. There was no secret about it, and he thought the Railway Companies had reason to complain that the responsibility was placed on them. It rather savoured of some other transactions of the Government in other matters, where, instead of taking the responsibility they were bound to take, they shifted it on to other shoulders. To show the evil of such a principle, he would say that, encouraged by the action of the Board of Trade, he supposed, he found that a small Railway Bill in that House affecting a very short distance—say, two or three miles—contained the obnoxious clause. The question was one of national importance, and it was left to small Companies to carry out the policy laid down by Her Majesty's Government. The principle might creep in everywhere, and be referred to as a precedent for the future. The proposal of the Government last

year was not the same as that now made. The Companies were to charge a reasonable sum for terminals now, and those who objected were to go before the Commission. What did this mean? It meant that the Companies were to charge what they pleased, and that the trader was to go to the expense of making an appeal to the Commission, which he would not do as a rule, and that the law as to terminals was to be a Judge-made law, not a laid-down principle by a Government measure dealing fairly with all concerned. If Mr. Price was right, let his opinion be taken, with due regard to the schedule of maximum rates. Now, they had the decisions of the Commission; but they wanted to give them instructions almost to reverse all their decisions without any adequate arrangement as to rates. Uncertainty was to be the word, and uncertainty in trade matters meant a great deal. "Reasonable" was the word used. What would be considered reasonable? In the Government measure of last year, what Parliament thought reasonable; in these Bills, what the Railway Commissioners thought right. Did their Lordships suppose that it would be possible for traders and others to go to the expense of going before the Commission? It had been shown to the contrary. The Commission had been in existence for years, and it was not available to everyone. It ought to be more available. However, private individuals and small combinations were not in a position at present to cope fairly with these great Companies. It was said that if terminals were granted to Railway Companies it would add from £1 6*s.* to 10*s.* a ton. He thought he was under rather than over the mark. But no one knew. It was to be a reasonable charge, and that was a point they had to deal with. He had something more to say on this point, and then he would pass on shortly to other subjects. There was a distinct principle in this question of terminals. It ought to be dealt with in a Government measure. Perhaps their Lordships would consider a moment what the result of dealing with a question of this kind would be by private legislation. The Bill in question would go before a Committee upstairs; it would contain all sorts of other provisions as to rates, and so on; the opposition would be carried on with great difficulty, owing to the limited purse of the opponents as contrasted with the unlimited means of the Railway Companies. The railways would be beaten on some small point, but would be ready to wait to carry the main point; they would exhaust the resources of traders and private individuals and drop the Bill. What would be the result? The Bill would be brought in the next Session, and, the resources of the trader being exhausted, a new principle in railway legislation would be established, a precedent not to be overruled. He was one of those who thought that it was wise that there should be such a deterrent to factious opposition to Private Bills; but it was not quite fair that Railway Companies, who possessed the greatest monopoly in the country, should be allowed so to deal with a question of principle that it was almost impossible for traders to avoid being beaten in detail. If such measures were passed, it would amount to a Trades Union of the worst kind among Railway Companies. The badly managed Companies would be able to compete with well-managed Companies, and by putting on unknown terminal charges make up for their blunders and mistakes. That was a point which, he thought, required attention; and he thought that agriculture and trade had a right to claim the introduction of a Government measure, which, if it did not meet their views, would, at all events, give them a chance of dealing on fair terms with the Railway Companies through their Representatives in Parliament, instead of being forced into a Committee Room, only to be defeated by the force of unlimited means; a battle which, in the long run, they must lose. To turn to the question of rates. It was no doubt desirable to have a fresh classification of rates. There were hundreds and hundreds of Acts of Parliament which it took an expert to understand; but if there were a re-classification of rates it should be on a system. So the Committee advised. It was quite impossible for a Government Department to do this. Why not, therefore, refer the whole question to a Commission? The Companies had gone into the matter and could give every information. Surely some fair tribunal could be arranged which could advise the Board of

Trade. Their Report would furnish a basis for a settlement sanctioned by a Government measure. Now the Companies were to be allowed not only to deal with a principle in railway legislation, but were to be allowed so to deal with their rates that they altered principles laid down in the past which might wisely be followed for the future. The Companies said—"We are pressed by the traders for a re-classification"—he was told so by a high official of one of the great Companies—and they say—"We are told by the Board of Trade to bring in our own measure. Why blame us? We are quite contented with the present rates." His answer to this would be—"Why increase your maximum rates? You say you do not charge your maximum rates now. Why, then, increase your maximum, and add terminals of an unknown quantity besides? It is obvious, if you do not want an increase, it is useless to complicate matters in this way." It was of no use the Railway Companies saying that the new rates would not increase the charges; they did, and particularly on short distances. This—the short-distance rate—was more important to agriculture than to any other interest, and to trade in many ways. Of course, the whole question was more or less guess-work, and he would rather trust to the calculation of experienced traders than to any other calculation he could make. It was said by Mr. Nicholls at Manchester the other day that the material and provender coming in and going out of that city by railway last year amounted to 321,717 tons, and that the proposed new rates would add an amount to the rates on this of £32,841. Their Lordships would understand that these statistics could best be gathered locally, as the question of terminals was so uncertain. Then it was stated by the Secretary of the Railway and Canal Traders' Association that on one line, which was only 85 miles long, the present rate for live poultry and fresh butter would be increased from 20*s.* to 36*s.* 6*d.* a ton for 60 miles, and that the rate for hops for the same distance would be increased from 10*s.* to 36*s.* 6*d.* a ton. This was, of course, in the long distance table, and short distances came off much worse. But while he touched on these one or two points statistically, he wanted to know why the railways should choose this particular moment to raise their rates? The other day, at a meeting of the London and North-Western Railway, the Chairman lamented that he could not declare a dividend of more than 7½ per cent. This was owing to depression in trade and agriculture. His noble Friend the Chairman of the Great Northern Railway was able to declare a dividend of 6 per cent only, owing to depression. This was terrible work, no doubt; but more terrible work had been done with agriculture and trade. It would be lucky if they could make both ends meet in many cases, and yet this was the time the Railway Companies chose to increase their rates. Surely it was a short-sighted policy. What was wanted was to encourage enterprize, not to drive trade away. The position of Railway Companies did not show any immediate necessity for meeting expenditure with a larger draw on the public, and it appeared that in depressed times the only result would be to do harm both to trade and the railways themselves. The cost of various articles was less to the Companies now. Steel rails—which lasted longer than the old rails—were at a low price. Coals were never much lower, and money could be raised at a cheap rate. It seemed hard on the traders of the country that this particular time should be chosen to raise rates. He hoped the Companies would see the question from a public-spirited point of view, and that some arrangement might be come to which would secure a proper classification of rates, and deal fairly with the trade and agriculture of the country. They never wanted help more than now, and if the railways were not careful they might find themselves with a very fine scale of rates, and terminals with very few able or willing to pay them. One more point he wished to mention—that was "undue preference." This was said to be necessary by the Companies, for if they did not give preference to foreign countries, the trade would be lost altogether. Why, if they could carry at a profit from foreign countries, could they not carry home produce at the same rate? No one knew except themseves, but everyone knew that traders here were hurt by it. This subject had been considered by the Commission on Agriculture; but things were worse than they were then, and still the railways went on

giving preferential rates to foreign produce. To show what other countries did, he might say that butter in Belgium was carried at 4*s.* 10*d.* a-ton, for a given distance, while English butter cost 10*s.* 1*d.* per ton; pig iron in Belgium was carried for 5*s.* a ton, while English iron cost 15*s.* to send the same distance. America reduced its rates by half, and yet American beef came to London from Liverpool at half the price of home-grown mutton. Hops were sent from Flushing right through Kent for 20*s.* a ton to London, while Kentish hops to London paid a rate of 37*s.* 6*d.* a ton; American cheese was brought through Cheshire at 25*s.* a ton, while Cheshire cheese was charged at the rate of 42*s.* 6*d.* a ton from Liverpool to London. When they saw these rates charged, it might well be said, why go into the question of Free Trade? The noble Earl on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Dunraven) might be able to reply to this question; but, meanwhile, he would point to the fact that a practical man—Mr. Rowlandson—had said as follows:—

"I have gone into the question of the difference of rates in the home and foreign agricultural produce, and taking the difference in those rates on my stock and corn, I find from those statistics that there is a tax to me of very nearly £100 upon my outgoings—I simply take the corn, cattle, and sheep—and that is a tax of 1*s.* 6*d.* per acre upon me. If I take it upon the carriage of foreign corn, it is a tax of 5*s.* per acre upon the growth of all my barley. When you come to take that over the whole agricultural area of the country, that is a very severe tax upon the farmers of this country. We have heard that it will be very much better to look carefully into those questions which press most heavily upon us at the present time, rather than grumble that we cannot do better for ourselves, and call upon Parliament to impose some tax upon foreign corn. I have gone into the question as to what would be the effect to me supposing there was a tax of 5*s.* imposed upon foreign corn in this country, and supposing I would get the full benefit of the 5*s.* per quarter, which has been proposed by some gentlemen in this country, the equalization of the foreign and home rates on agricultural produce on the basis of the foreign rates would be nearly as great a benefit to me as any good I should receive from the imposition of a duty of 5*s.* per quarter on foreign."

It was he (Lord Henniker) who spoke at the meeting in question of setting things right themselves before applying to Parliament for redress; and he thought this quotation alone justified him in his opinion, and that the attack on Free Trade, and the idea that foreign competition ruined the country, might be tempered with a consideration of these facts, put even more strongly by others than by himself, and that their Lordships would see that Free Trade did not do all the mischief. Their Lordships might depend upon it that these preferential rates would hurt the trade of the country, and that the rates now paid by traders were all if not more than they could fairly bear. The question was one which required much consideration, and was of national importance. He ventured to lay down the following propositions:—That in dealing with a great question of this kind—a question of principle—a responsible Government should take the initiative; that in doing so the danger of unlimited control of the Railway Companies over rates should not be left out of consideration, for the present terminal proposal was practically that; that maximum rates, if they did not include terminals, should be fixed accordingly; that the question of re-classification of rates should be left to Parliament to decide finally; that the undue preference at present in force should be carefully considered, and that the Railway Commission should be made more easily and economically approachable. Let them cast the recommendations of the Committee on one side, cast these small negotiations with the railways on one side, and appoint a Commission to consider the classification of rates, when the Government could bring in a Bill of its own dealing generally with the questions of principle involved. If Parliament thought fit to reverse the policy of the past let it do so; but that this should be done by private legislation was hardly fair to those chiefly concerned outside the railways. He expected no answer from the noble Lord opposite (Lord Sudeley), for he said that he could not enter into the discussion; but he hoped he had said nothing which could prejudice the important negotiations which were going on, and that this most important question might soon be brought to a satisfactory settlement.

Moved, "That there be laid before this House copy of the judgments of the Railway Commission with respect to terminals, and also of the judgment of the House of Lords in the case of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company v. Gidlow."—(*The Lord Henniker.*)

LORD SUDELEY said, that there could be no doubt that the subject brought forward by the noble Lord was one of the greatest importance to the mercantile interest of this country; but his speech placed him in a somewhat difficult position, because negotiations were going on between the Board of Trade and the Railway Companies and the various interests concerned, and discussion might very likely prejudice what was being done. Under these circumstances, it was quite impossible for him to state fully and exactly the views of the Board of Trade. On Friday last he appealed to the noble Lord to postpone his Motion; but he did not see his way to do so without certain pledges being made, which the Government could not give. He informed the noble Lord that the Board of Trade were negotiating with the traders on the one side and the Railway Companies on the other, and that there was considerable danger lest the discussion should jeopardize these communications. The noble Lord stated that he did not see how it could be necessary to postpone the discussion of a subject of domestic policy, as no possible advantage could arise from keeping such a matter secret. He would, in reply, merely say that when a Department were carrying on negotiations, surely they were the best authorities for deciding whether discussion was likely or not to interfere with the negotiations. The noble Lord had traced down the historical position of that question, and had stated fully and frankly the views of the traders. There was, however, another side of the case—namely, that of the great Railway Companies, who naturally looked upon the whole matter under a very different aspect. As had been stated, this question was very fully gone into by the Select Committee in 1881 and 1882. Very grave charges and complaints against the Railway Companies were made before the Committee as to rates being excessive, preventing the development of traffic. It was shown clearly that the classification of goods was most imperfect, and that it was extremely difficult for traders to discover the maximum legal rate for any particular kind of goods. As much had been said against the railways, it must be remembered that the Committee in their Report distinctly stated—

"That they acquitted the Railway Companies of any grave dereliction of their duty to the public."

The Committee, among other things, recommended that there should be one uniform classification of goods over the whole railway system, and that the Railway Companies should consolidate their special Acts so far as they affected rates and charges. They also recommended that terminal charges should be recognized, subject to publication, and, in case of challenge, to sanction of Railway Commissioners. He thought that what was required was that the Report of the Select Committee should be carried out in a manner satisfactory to the great interests concerned both of the Railway Companies and the traders. The present position was simply this. Last year the Board of Trade had brought in a Bill dealing with the subject; but the difficulties raised by both sides were so great, that taken together with the position of Public Business at the time, it was considered hopeless to proceed with the Bill. In that Bill it had been found utterly impossible to deal with the question of classification by means of a schedule, as the basis of revision, the Railway Clearing House classification, contained no less than 2,300 different articles. The Bill, however, contained the following clause, throwing upon the Railway Companies the *onus* of bringing in Bills to provide the new classification of maximum rates, and such revision of rates as might be necessary:—

"(3.) The provisions contained in this section with respect to terminals shall not apply to any railway company until such company has submitted to Parliament a revised classification of rates and a revised schedule of maximum rates, nor until such revised classification and schedule have been approved by Parliament."

This classification of rates was nothing more or less than simplification, but as it dealt with 2,300 articles, it was, notwithstanding, most difficult to arrange. Acting upon the clause in the proposed Bill of last year and on the Report of the Committee, the Railway Companies had brought forward Bills now before the other House dealing with the subject. The second reading of these Bills was postponed until after Easter. Unfortunately, however, whether it was that the proposals of the Railway Companies were misunderstood, whether it was owing to the maximum rates being

regarded as likely to be the actual rate, or whether it was the inherent difficulties of arranging such a classification as would reconcile all interests, undoubtedly it was the fact that these Bills of the Railway Companies had excited serious opposition on all sides. This Bill would not be proceeded with until after Easter, and it was hoped that during the interval some arrangement would be arrived at. The view of the Board of Trade was that it was to the interest of all parties that this question of classification and division of rates should be settled; and, therefore, both parties should agree to an inquiry by a competent authority, by which a basis of settlement could be arrived at. The Board of Trade were now endeavouring by negotiation to arrive at some understanding on this point. They were of opinion that if these statutory rates and provisions were to be revised at all, the revision must be complete, and it must be a revision in the interests of the Railway Companies as well as in the interests of the public. The noble Lord was anxious that it should be laid down that legislation on the result of this inquiry should be brought forward and carried out by the Government. This it was impossible, at the present time, to pledge the Government to do; but surely it was not very material how legislation should be carried when all parties were agreed. The Board of Trade did not see their way, in the present state of Public Business, to bring in a Bill similar to the one they had introduced last year; but their Lordships would see that the first matter to get settled by some competent tribunal was the question of the classification and revision of rates. There would be no objection to granting the Return asked for; but, as the judgments would be presented to Parliament in the usual manner at the end of the year, he hoped the noble Lord would consider that sufficient

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, the matter had already been inquired into and reported upon sufficiently; and he was surprised to hear a suggestion of a Royal Commission coming from the Board of Trade.

LORD SUDELEY said, he had not said it was intended to appoint a Royal Commission, as he had carefully guarded himself from saying so; but it was one of the suggestions made by the noble Lord who brought forward the subject, and, no doubt, it was one possible solution.

THE MARQUESS OF HUNTLY said, he regretted he had misunderstood the noble Lord. There was a unanimous feeling throughout the country that these Bills were as monstrous proposals as had ever been submitted to Parliament. The injury done to English trade by the preference given to foreign goods as compared with home goods passing over the railways was very great. As an instance of the injustice that was caused in this way, he might instance the experience of a firm of English piano manufacturers, who found that American pianos were carried on the railways at 25*s.* per ton, while English made pianos were charged 50*s.* per ton; and the explanation given was that the English goods were so much more valuable. He held that it was the duty of the Board of Trade, on behalf of the Government, to protect the trade of this country; and it was their duty at once to bring in a satisfactory Bill to settle the question of rates in the interest of trade and agriculture.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he wished to add his voice to that of the noble Marquess who had just sat down, in urging on the Government the extreme importance of this question, and the deep impression it had made on the minds of the agriculturists and traders of this country. The scheme of the Railway Companies appeared to him to be open to considerable objection. It had the effect of lowering the rates for long distances and raising them for short distances, thus inevitably favouring large operators as against small, and injuring most of all the farmers and small dealers in country places. There was, however, another grievance which was felt to be intolerable—namely, the protection given to foreign industry by the Railway Companies charging rates enormously disproportionate in favour of the foreign importer as against the native producer. His noble Friend who had brought forward that matter with so much ability had given them a case in which cheese, butter, and other products were conveyed from Liverpool to London at a far lower rate than from that part of Cheshire through which the line passed. It was inconceivable that such a system,

whatever arguments might be used to justify it, would be endured much longer by the traders and agriculturists of this country. He rather regretted that the discussion on terminals and general rates, although important, had rather obscured the questions raised by the Duke of Richmond and Gordon's Commission. He hoped that something would be done to insist that in dealing with foreign and English traders at least the foreigner should not be preferred to the Englishman.

EARL FORTESCUE said, he must protest against what was a practical bounty given to the employment of English capital abroad in the establishment or enlargement of manufactories in foreign countries; for, to the hurt of England, they thus were enabled to undersell British traders with goods which were not produced cheaper, but were brought into the market cheaper in consequence of the lower railway rates charged upon them not only abroad, but also by a most unjust preference in England. There was a similar bounty on foreign corn and live-stock. Our heavy railway charges, in short, were practically levying import and export duties of a most discouraging and oppressive kind on English products and manufactures for the benefit of the foreign producer and the foreign manufacturer; and none the less invidiously because the proceeds went, not to the relief of the taxpayers, but to the profit of the railway shareholders.

EARL GRANVILLE said, that perhaps he would be allowed to make a remark on that subject. He was a producer and a trader in the very centre of England; and, therefore, their Lordships might imagine what his interest was on that question. The fact of his interest being entirely on one side made him extremely reluctant to take any unnecessary part in that discussion; and he flattered himself that when the matter came before the Government for decision he would entirely divest himself of any bias that he had, and would consider it in a fair way. But he thought it must be obvious to everyone that the prosperity of the railways and of the producers of the country must really be the same. The railways were necessary to the producers, and the producers to the railways; and it appeared to him impossible if the subject could be calmly considered—whatever exact mode they might adopt for arriving at the end—but that that end should be common to both interests, which should not be treated as antagonistic to one another.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, it was all very well to classify goods; but it seemed to him that the same charge should be made for goods so classified. It was absurd to say that pianos were to be put in a certain class if an English piano was to be made to pay more than a foreign piano. There must be the same charge for everyone. If they did that they would act fairly towards all parties; but if they left it open for the Railway Companies, after goods were classified, to charge less for corn from America than for corn from England, where was the use of the classification?

LORD HENNIKER said, he must press for the Return, for such judgments were lost in the pages of a Blue Book; and he wished them to be placed before their Lordships in a convenient form. For the same reason he expressed a hope that the noble Lord would allow to be added to the Return which he had asked for, the judgment of the House of Lords in the case of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway *v.* Gidlow.

LORD SUDELEY said, he was willing to assent to the request of the noble Lord.

Motion amended, and *agreed to*.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE YEOMANRY.—QUESTION.

LORD HARRIS asked the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether extra pay for troop drills is to be granted to the Yeomanry this year and in future? And he urged the importance, especially under existing circumstances, of affording every proper encouragement to that Force.

THE EARL OF MORLEY, in reply, said, provision had been made in the Estimates for two extra troop drills at the rate of 3*s.* 6*d.* per man per drill, and the total estimated sum would be £3,500; but to enable extra pay to be earned, two-thirds of the enrolled strength of the troop must attend the drill. He would like also to mention that up to this time there had been no Yeomanry Regulations; but Regulations had now

been prepared, and would be printed in a very short time.

POISONS BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to regulate the sale of poisons—Was *presented* by The LORD PRESIDENT; read 1°. (No. 33.)

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 9th March, 1885.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — Salmon Fisheries (Ireland), *nominated.*

SUPPLY — *considered in Committee* — ARMY ESTIMATES: ADDITIONAL NUMBER OF MEN.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Order (Poor Law) (Corwen, &c.)* [86]. Local Authorities (Expenses of Conferences)* [88]. Highways* [89]. River Thames (No. 2)* [90].

First Reading—Justices' Jurisdiction* [87].

Committee—Report—Municipal Voters (Relief)* [64].

Withdrawn—River Thames* [71].

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE SCOTLAND — TRIAL OF CROFTERS AT STORNOWAY.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department. Whether his attention has been called to the trial before Sheriff Substitute Black at Stornoway, on the 20th inst., of three crofters and an apprentice baker for mobbing a tacksman named Martin in that town on the 29th December; whether it is the case, as stated by the sheriff, that Martin had recently mutilated some sheep belonging to crofters which he had found on his land, and had himself wantonly provoked the demonstration against him by denouncing the crofters of the island as "thieves and robbers;" whether the sheriff discharged the principal accused on the ground that Martin had "metaphorically speaking thrown at his throat;" whether he sentenced the other crofters to 30 days, and the apprentice baker to 14 days' imprisonment, without option of a fine, on the ground that there was no evidence that they had heard the provocative language used; and, whether, taking into consideration the fact that the crowd which hooted Martin consisted of 200 persons, that he was not physically assaulted, and that there was no evidence to show that the men imprisoned were ringleaders or exceptionally active members of the mob, he will consider the propriety of revising the severe sentences passed upon them?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Attention has been called to this trial. In previous answers given in this House, I have stated fully the circumstances relating to the sheep referred to in the second paragraph of the Question. It appears that Martin did in a shop use, in the presence of Macdonald, the expression quoted in that paragraph, and that the Sheriff-Substitute, viewing this as a provocation, did not convict Macdonald of breach of the peace; but he did convict the other three persons charged, and sentenced them to the terms of imprisonment mentioned. It does not appear that the mobbing and breach of the peace was caused by the use of the language referred to, or, indeed, that any of the other persons, numbering about 200, who took part in it, knew of what Martin had said. If this had been an isolated offence the sentences would have appeared unduly severe; but the Sheriff-Substitute reports that he pronounced these sentences because the occurrence was merely a manifestation of a spirit of lawlessness, unhappily prevalent in the island at present; and a resident Judge has better means than anyone else can have of forming an opinion as to what measure of punishment is requisite as a deterrent where such a spirit of lawlessness prevails. Under these circumstances there does not seem to be any sufficient ground for revising the sentences.

DR. CAMERON said, he would take any opportunity that might arise to call attention to the language of the Judge.

TRADE AND MANUFACTURES — THE OUTPUT OF COAL.

MR. C. B. M'LAREN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can state, from the Returns furnished to the Home Office, the separate output of coal during the year 1884 in the different districts of

England, in Wales, and in Scotland; and, by how much the total output of 1884 falls short of the output of 1883?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, it would be inconvenient to give the information asked for in reply to a Question; but the details could be obtained by his hon. Friend from the Home Office. The falling-off in 1884, as compared with 1883, was 3,619,000 tons.

POST OFFICE—THE NORTH AMERICAN MAILS.

MR. BAXTER asked the Postmaster General, If he is aware of the increasing dissatisfaction existing in consequence of the continued transmission of mails to North America by slow steamers; and, if he will take measures to introduce, on the part of the British Post Office, the system on which the United States Government have so long acted, of sending the mails by the fastest boats only, without reference to the Company to which they belong, and without being hampered by unnecessary contracts?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The question raised by my right hon. Friend is an extremely important and difficult one. My lamented Predecessor, Mr. Fawcett, gave great attention to it, and was very desirous of effecting the change aimed at by my right hon. Friend. With this view he gave Notice, more than a year ago, to terminate the contracts with the three Companies who now carry the mails. He found, however, very great difficulty in substituting any other arrangement, and he was finally compelled to renew the contracts for another year. In the very last communication I received from Mr. Fawcett after the commencement of his illness, when I was acting as his Deputy, he told me that it was his intention to recommend that a Committee of this House should investigate the subject. I think, therefore, I cannot do better than adopt this course myself; and if the right hon. Gentleman will move for a Committee the Government will assent to it.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT —ARMS' LICENCES—JAMES LORD, OF MOUNT NUGENT.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that at the time James Lord, of Mount Nugent, county Cavan, got a licence to carry arms he was not holder of any land; and, if not, what notice will he take of the conduct of the two magistrates who certified he was a landholder?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I regret that I am not yet in a position to give a definite answer to the particular point of the hon. Member's Question, and that I am obliged to again ask him to be good enough to postpone it to a later day.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS — MAGHERACLOGHER, CO. DONEGAL.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will cause to be placed upon the Table, originals or authenticated Copies of all Papers in connection with the election of Poor Law Guardians for the electoral divisions of Magheraclogher and Meenaclady, county of Donegal, in the year 1884, and of all Correspondence thereon with the Local Government Board, including the Papers and Correspondence regarding the two bye-elections for the division of Magheraclogher, one the same year, and the other in January of this year; also, originals of authenticated Copies of all Papers and Correspondence touching the election of Guardians for Crossroads in 1883 and 1884, and the bye-elections for the same division in 1884; and, all Papers and Correspondence respecting the election of Guardians for the electoral division of Creeslagh in 1883?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Correspondence in question is voluminous, and its production would involve great trouble and expense. The points which arose, and which have all been finally settled, were not of general interest or importance; and I cannot see that any public good would be done by the production of the Correspondence in the form of a Report to this House; but if the hon. Member will tell me what parts of the Correspondence interest him, I will endeavour to have it in some form, so that he may see it himself.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CO. TYRONE.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,

Why there are no magistrates appointed in the town of Beragh, county Tyrone; is Rev. Archdeacon Dixon, the magistrate residing near Beragh, an invalid, and therefore unable to attend to the duties; is it true that there is no magistrate living nearer to Beragh than a mile and a-half, and he has a situation in Omagh, and is therefore absent from the place; is it a fact that the names of two Catholics (one from Beragh and the other from Sixmilecross) and a Protestant were sent forward by a memorial to the Lord Lieutenant of the county for his consideration, and that the Protestant was appointed and the Catholics rejected; is it true that of the six magistrates who attend the local Petty Sessions only one is a Roman Catholic, who is the resident magistrate, living in Omagh, and only appears occasionally; and, why is the Petty Sessions not held in Beragh, the principal town of the district?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Lord Chancellor has reason to believe that the Lieutenant of Tyrone, the Earl of Charlemont, has found it very difficult to get a magistrate in Beragh; but in September last a magistrate was appointed in the neighbourhood, who is available there, and no inconvenience has been reported to the Lord Chancellor, although the Rev. Archdeacon is invalided, and at present unable to attend Petty Sessions. Lord Charlemont is on the Continent, and no information can be had as to any memorial sent to him; but the Lord Chancellor states that, from what he knows of Lord Charlemont's action as Lieutenant of Tyrone, no consideration founded on religion would actuate him in rejecting any man. The magistrates attending Sixmilecross Petty Sessions are composed of Protestants and Presbyterians. The Resident Magistrate, who is a Roman Catholic, is a most regular attendant. The question of fixing the place of holding Petty Sessions is one for the magistrates of Quarter Sessions. The Lord Lieutenant has power to set them in motion, and without doubt would do so in the present instance if sufficient cause were shown for his interference.

Mr. HEALY: Would the right hon. Gentleman have any objection to ask the police as to the convenience of the matter to the prisoners and to themselves.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know what is the usual form; but I will look and see.

RAILWAYS (INDIA)—PREFERENCE RATES FOR WHEAT.

Mr. BORLASE asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is a fact, as currently reported amongst agriculturists, that on some of the Indian Railways, there are special preference rates for native-grown wheat consigned to England?

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether all the wheat produced in India is not "native-grown;" and, whether, in fact, the Indian Railways do not charge rates for its conveyance much in excess of the rates charged on American through lines, and enormously in excess when the comparative value of labour is taken into account?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: All Indian wheat is native grown. There are no special preference rates for wheat consigned to England; and, from information placed before the recent Select Committee on Indian Railways, I learn that the mileage rate for the carriage of wheat is greatly in excess of that charged on some of the American lines.

CENTRAL ASIA—MAP OF AFGHANISTAN.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he will refer to a letter which appeared in *The Pall Mall Gazette* of the 3rd March, from the late experienced Surveyor General of India, General Walker, regarding the map of Afghanistan, and to say what map is to be relied on; also to a letter from Mr. Marvin, which appeared in *The Globe* of the 3rd March, also regarding the Afghanistan map, in harmony with General Walker's views; and, if a map which the Government consider reliable will be furnished for the information of Members, together with a Memorandum from General Walker on the Construction and Compilation of the Map of Afghanistan?

Mr. J. K. CROSS said, he understood that his hon. and gallant Friend intended to withdraw the Question; but he might say that a map would be placed in the Tea Room at the earliest possible moment.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—BELFAST POLICE COURT—MR. FORBES, R.M.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to a report of proceedings in the Belfast Police Court, which appeared in *The Belfast Morning News* of 5th February 1885, in which it was alleged, and not since denied, that Mr. Forbes, one of the resident magistrates of the district, caused a summons to be issued against the chief of the fire brigade in Belfast for a supposed assault on a policeman named M'Lelland; that he (Mr. Forbes) issued and signed the said summons; that he fixed a day for the hearing of the complaint so that he (Mr. Forbes) might adjudicate on the case; is it true that when Mr. Forbes found that he could not be present to act judicially in the matter, he made an order to Mr. Coulter, prosecuting solicitor, to have it adjourned to a future date, so that he could be present; is it true that Mr. Harper, solicitor for the defendant, opposed Mr. Coulter's effort to have a date fixed to suit Mr. Forbes' convenience, and urged strongly the fact that Mr. Forbes' conduct in the case was charged with the suspicion of unfairness towards the defendant, and that if the case were adjourned for Mr. Forbes' attendance, his client would be obliged to make an affidavit that before Stipendiary Forbes "he could not get a fair trial;" and, what notice will be taken in case it be true that Mr. Forbes' conduct is correctly described?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I find that in this case a summons and a cross-summons were issued; the former at the instance of the Constabulary, and the latter at the instance of the Solicitor of the Corporation. The summons was fixed for hearing on the 4th February, and the cross-summons on the 11th, and both were signed by Colonel Forbes, in the ordinary discharge of his duty. Some of the parties to the summons case appear to have desired an adjournment to the 11th, in order that both cases might be heard together, and that the presence of a Resident Magistrate—which was doubtful on the 4th—might be secured; but the Bench before whom the summons came on the 4th decided to proceed with it, and the result was that both cases were then settled. It is not true that the cross-summons was fixed for the 11th, or that the adjournment of the other case to that day was applied for with the view of Colonel Forbes adjudicating on the cases, as I understand that he was on leave on the 4th, and that neither on that day nor on the 11th could he have heard the cases, as his turn of duty, on both occasions, would have been to sit in the other branch of the Police Court.

ARMY—SOLDIERS' READING ROOM, ALLAHABAD.

MR. HEALY asked the Secretary of State for War, What justification Colonel Crawford has offered for the removal of Catholic literature from the soldiers' reading room at Allahabad; has he been asked to cite the passages he thinks objectionable; and, what action do the Government propose to take?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: A Report from the Commanding Officer was received; but it was so meagre that I directed that a more full explanation should be called for. I expect to receive it during the present month.

LAW AND POLICE—USE OF REVOLVERS.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the attention of the Government has been directed to the increasing habit of carrying revolvers; and, whether he contemplates any measures, legislative or otherwise, for putting down this baneful and uncivilized practice?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I very much agree with my hon. Friend's views on the subject of carrying revolvers. It is quite plain that mere licences are of no use as a remedy for the evil. I think it is a very serious matter for consideration whether there ought not to be more severe penalties attached to crimes when committed by persons carrying revolvers or explosives—something similar to the penalties enacted for garrotting. There is a Bill having that object coming before the House, and upon that Bill I think the matter may very properly be considered.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would

consider the propriety of requiring the registration of the sale of revolvers, and also prohibiting the sale of firearms to persons under a certain age? He had information, on good authority, that in public schools revolvers were frequently carried by the pupils. He would also ask whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider the advisability of prohibiting the carrying of concealed firearms without a special licence?

[No reply.]

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—SUMMONS FOR TRESPASS IN HUNTING AT BAGENALSTOWN.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is the fact that Major Hutchinson, R.M., and other magistrates at Bagenalstown, on 13th February, dismissed a summons for trespass under 14 and 15 Vic. c. 92, s. 8, brought by a farmer named M'Grath, against a huntsman named Duffield, although the offence was clearly proved and the trespass not denied, did the bench decide that, even admitting the trespass was wilful, still riding away over the lands was a sufficient compliance with the order to leave; and, if so, have the Government considered the serious results that may result consequent upon such trespasses, in defiance of the occupiers, if the latter discover that they have no chance of legal redress against huntsmen?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): The magistrates at Bagenalstown dismissed a summons for trespass brought by a farmer named M'Grath against a Mr. Duffield for a trespass committed in hunting over his lands. They did so on the ground that the trespass was not shown to be either wilful or malicious, and that, therefore, the remedy was not under the Summary Jurisdiction Act. They did not decide that, if the trespass was wilful, riding away over the lands excused the defendant. They also pointed out that the remedy in the case before them was by civil action.

MR. HEALY: Has the hon. and learned Gentleman said whether it was not distinctly a trespass; whether the gentleman was told to leave, and, in defiance of the occupier, rode away over the lands; and whether the magistrates dismissed the case? Is that a fact, or is it not?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) was understood to say that he had already given his answer.

MR. HEALY: I will put this Question again, so that we may understand distinctly. I beg to give Notice that I will ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, on Thursday next, whether, in this case, the magistrates refused to convict a gentleman who trespassed over lands in defiance of the occupier?

EGYPT—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY—CONTRACT FOR LOCOMOTIVES.

MR. HOULDSWORTH asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is the case, as stated in the newspapers, that a "large contract for portable railway and small locomotives for the Soudan" has been given to Mr. W. G. Bagnall, Castle Engine Works, at Stafford; if so, whether Mr. Bagnall has ever made any locomotives before; whether he has the necessary machines and tools for the execution of this contract on his premises; whether he has to begin by building workshops before he can begin to do the work contracted for; and, whether there are not many larger and more experienced firms in the Country fully prepared and able to do work of this description without any delay, and at the lowest possible cost?

MR. C. B. M'LAREN asked, whether it was not an abuse of the Forms of the House to put on the Notice Paper a Question affecting the business capacity and credit of individual traders?

MR. SPEAKER: I do not see anything out of Order in the Question, or it would not be upon the Paper.

MR. BRAND: It is the case that an order for five 18-inch gauge locomotives and certain railway materials of the same gauge has been given to the Castle Engine Works firm, being a portion of a larger supply distributed between them and other makers. Small locomotives of this class are, I am given to understand, a specialty of this firm. An Inspector from the War Office visited their works, and reported that he found everything necessary for the execution of this contract, as well as locomotives in progress of construction, so that the necessity for building workshops for this particular contract is not apparent.

MR. C. B. M'LAREN asked, whether it was not the fact that Mr. Bagnall was the President of the Conservative Association at Stafford?

SIR JOSEPH PEASE asked, whether these locomotives were included in Messrs. Lucas and Aird's contract?

MR. BRAND said, the locomotives were included in that contract.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—HARMONDSWORTH SCHOOL BOARD—CONVICTION OF A MEMBER.

MR. BERESFORD HOPE (for Mr. J. G. TALBOT) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether his attention has been called to the conviction at the Uxbridge Petty Sessions, of Frederick Thorpe, a member of the Harmondsworth School Board, for having been drunk and disorderly, and using the most vile language; whether the defendant still remains a member of the School Board; and, whether he will take any steps to remove the scandal and to prevent the recurrence of similar scandals?

MR. MUNDELLA: The fact of Frederick Thorpe's conviction has been notified to the Education Department by the four other members of the Harmondsworth School Board; but we have no power under the Statute to declare the seat vacant, except for prolonged absence, bankruptcy, or imprisonment for crime. There can be no doubt that the member in question is totally unfit to continue a member of the Board, or to have any part in the control of teachers in the conduct of schools. If, as we understand, the other members of the Board find it impossible to act with Mr. Thorpe, the Department has the means, and will certainly put them in force, of relieving the Board from their difficulties. The proper solution would be for Mr. Thorpe to resign.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE 24TH MIDDLESEX VOLUNTEERS.

MR. CARINGTON asked the Secretary of State for War, If the detachment of the 24th Middlesex Volunteers, who were under orders for active service in Egypt, were paraded at the Tower of London on the 3rd instant for the purpose of being inspected by Mr. Turnor, of the Post Office, why an inspection was not held by a Military officer of suitable rank; and, whether this ceremony took place with the concurrence of the Military authorities; and, if that be the case, whether it is intended that Mr. Turner should inspect any other detachments or corps who are or may be under orders to proceed to Egypt?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The detachment to which my hon. Friend alludes consisted of 20 men connected with the Post Office Department as letter sorters, who are being sent out to Suakin to undertake the Postal Service. They are attached to the Post Office Volunteers as members of the Army Reserve, the object being that they should be under military discipline when serving with an Army in the field. They were paraded at the Tower of London on the 3rd instant, in order that, as head of the Department, I might bid them farewell. I was, unfortunately, unable to be present, on account of a severe cold; and I asked Mr. Turnor, the Financial Secretary of the Post Office, to say a few words on my behalf to them. The military inspection of the corps by their own commanding officer had taken place some days previously, and the parade the hon. Member refers to was only for the purpose I mention. I have, in a similar manner, bid farewell to-day to another detachment of telegraph men who are going out to join the Engineers at Suakin in a similar position, and I shall continue to do so whenever detachments are sent out from the Department of which I have control.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—THE STEAMSHIP "CLYDE."

MR. CARINGTON asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What was the result of the litigation between the Admiralty and the owners of the s.s. *Clyde*, which was lost near the Cape of Good Hope in 1879?

MR. CAINE: The trial ended on the 17th of November, 1880, by a verdict in favour of the Admiralty. Damages to the extent of £18,346 were paid by the owners of the steamship *Clyde*, of which sum £16,608 18*s*. 7*d*. were placed to the credit of the War Department, and £1,737 1*s*. 5*d*. were retained by the Admiralty.

NAVY—DOCKYARD ARTIFICERS.

MR. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If the

Petition of the leading men of the steam branch in the Dockyards has been considered by their Lordships; and, whether it is intended to deal with the claims of this class?

Mr. CAINE: The Petition of the leading men of the steam branch in the Dockyards has been considered by the Admiralty; and it has been decided not to make any alteration in their position until experience has been had of the value of the change recently effected in the position of the leading men of shipwrights.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—NAVAL ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

Mr. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the present exigencies of the Services do not warrant the acceptance by the Government of the proposals made from Plymouth, and other towns, of Volunteers who are seeking to be enrolled as Naval Artillerymen?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: A conference will shortly be held between the Authorities of the Admiralty and War Office, with a view to determine what duties shall be assigned to the Naval Artillery Volunteers in the defence of the coast and the mercantile ports. The enrolment of additional corps will be postponed for a short period until the scheme has been matured. In a time of emergency opportunities would be afforded to eligible men of Naval Artillery Volunteers to serve in sea-going ships.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—UNION RATING.

Colonel COLTHURST asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government propose to deal with the question of Union Rating this Session?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not at present in a position to make any announcement on the subject referred to in this Question.

WATER SUPPLY (METROPOLIS)—THE WATER COMPANIES' ASSESSMENT.

Mr. FIRTH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that at each of the last three quinquennial valuations of the Metropolis its rateable value has been increased between two and three millions sterling in respect of simple increment of value, and irrespective of all increase consequent upon new houses or upon the structural improvement of old ones; whether he is aware that under the working of "The Metropolis Valuation Act, 1869," there has thus been an increase of nearly eight millions sterling of assessed annual value upon which the Water Companies are able to charge London consumers, and thus enormously increase their income without any increase of supply; and, whether as this year a further assessment of the Metropolis is taking place, he will take steps to prevent the continuance of the system under which, in default of immediate legislation, the London Water Companies will this year be able to increase their income by £100,000 a-year, and the capital value of their property by more than £2,000,000 sterling, at the expense of Londoners, and without in any way improving or increasing the water supply?

Colonel MAKINS asked the right hon. Gentleman, Whether he was aware that it was a fact that Water Companies' charges were based upon an assessment of their own, which was not affected by the variations in the quinquennial assessments; whether the Water Companies were assessed on their profits, while all other trades were assessed on the rental value of their premises; whether since the last assessment the Water Companies had paid £50,000 a-year more than they had paid before 1880; and whether, since 1852, they had not incurred an expenditure in works on the Upper Thames amounting to upwards of £7,000,000?

Mr. COOPE asked the right hon. Gentleman, Whether he was not aware that the Water Companies had to assess their charges on the net annual value, as settled in Dobbs's case; and whether the Question of the hon. Member for Chelsea Mr. Firth was not based on entire misapprehension?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: In answer to the Question of the hon. Member for Middlesex (Mr. Coope), I cannot say that the Question of the hon. Member for Chelsea is based on an entire misapprehension. Although it is true that water rates are founded in law on the net annual value, it is quite certain that a rise in the assessment is

extremely likely to lead in the future, as in the past, to a rising in the estimate of the net annual value. That is to say, if you find that the houses are rated higher than they were in the previous five years, it is extremely likely that the Water Companies, basing themselves on the net annual value, will say that the net annual value must be higher than before. Consequently a rise—no doubt a considerable rise—in the quinquennial assessment is extremely likely to lead to a great rise in the charges on the houses for water. I can only repeat what I have said before, that I think the continual increase in the charge for water, without any proportionate increase in the supply, is a great injustice to the people of London. It has arisen, no doubt, from improvident legislation in the past. What is to be the remedy is not very easy to say. The Corporation of London attempted it last year without any very great success, though I did what I could to help them. As to the real remedy for this state of things, I think my hon. Friend the Member for Chelsea and myself are pretty well agreed what it ought to be.

MR. FIRTH gave Notice that in Committee on the Waterworks Clauses Bill, which had now passed a second reading, he would move the introduction of words for the purpose of carrying out the object of his Question.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—ENGLAND AND GERMANY—THE DESPATCH OF MAY 5.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is to be understood by the statement in Lord Granville's Despatch of 7th February to Sir Edward Malet that the Despatch of Prince Bismarck to Count Munster of 5th May never had been communicated to him, that a Copy of it was not left with him, or that it neither had been read to him nor its contents verbally stated to him; whether Count Munster did at any time fulfil the instructions which, as stated in *The North German Gazette*, he had received on 5th May, to give Lord Granville to understand that, if England refused to come to terms with Germany, the latter would seek an understanding with France, and that England declined to meet this German advance; whether at the interviews, which took place between Count Herbert Bismarck and Lord Granville, when the former was sent on a mission to London, "in the hope that he might succeed where the Ambassador had failed," Count Münster was present; and, whether Count Herbert Bismarck left England without being apprised by Lord Granville of the fact that Prince Bismarck's Despatch of 5th May had never been communicated to him?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: With the permission of the House, I beg leave to read the following letter, which Lord Granville has addressed to me on the subject of my hon. Friend's Question, and which he has authorized me to read to the House:—

"March 9, 1885.

"Dear Fitzmaurice,

"I take the unusual course of writing to you a letter in answer to Mr. Labouchere's Questions, as they affect me personally rather than the Foreign Office. I never received, nor had I until lately any knowledge of, Prince Bismarck's despatch of May 5. Count Münster and Count Herbert Bismarck, not long afterwards, each told me that the German Government could not maintain a friendly attitude on Egyptian matters if we continued to be unfriendly on Colonial questions. I denied that we had been unfriendly, and gave positive assurances, on the part of my Colleagues and myself, of friendly action for the future. Both Count Herbert Bismarck and Prince Bismarck expressed at the time their satisfaction with these assurances. The tension which has since arisen resulted from the serious difference of opinion on the part of the two Governments as to whether those assurances have been kept or broken. I need not renew that discussion, more especially as I have reason to hope that this friction will be a thing of the past. Count Munster was not present at the conversations which I had with Count Herbert Bismarck. It is not usual for the Ambassador and his First Secretary to come at the same time. What I have stated above will show that it was impossible for me to complain to Count Herbert Bismarck of the non-communication of a despatch which I did not know to exist—a despatch which appears to have been secret, and to have dealt generally with the political situation for the guidance of Count Münster.

"Yours sincerely,

"GRANVILLE."

MR. GORST asked, whether the noble Lord was able to say whether, subsequent to the arrival of Count Herbert Bismarck, or up to the present, Lord Granville had received a copy of the despatch of the 5th of May; and, if not, whether Her Majesty's Government would try to induce the German Government to consent to furnish it?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I think the hon. and learned Member had better give Notice of that Question.

Mr. GORST: I will put it down for to-morrow.

ARMY—ROYAL ENGINEERS' DEPARTMENT, WOOLWICH

Mr. H. S. NORTHCOTE asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is intended to grant Commissions as Quartermasters of Works for Surveyors' duties in the Royal Engineers' Department to six Sergeant Major Foremen of Works; and, if so, what are the names of the Warrant Officers selected for this recognition of their long services as Sergeant Major Foremen of Works?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The promotions in question cannot be made until after the 31st of March; and it would be most unusual to announce the names of the individuals to be promoted before the promotions are actually gazetted.

PARLIAMENT PRIVATE BUSINESS—RAILWAY RATES AND CHARGES BILLS.

Sir BERNHARD SAMUELSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the report is correct that he has received an assurance from the various Railway Companies promoting Rates and Charges Bills that those Bills will not be brought on till after Easter?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir; the statement is correct. I have received a positive assurance from the Companies that they will not seek for the second reading of the Bills before Easter.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND ACT, 1882—EXTRA POLICE, CLARE COUNTY

Mr. O'SHEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to a resolution of the Ennis Board of Guardians asking the Grand Jury of Clare to request His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to be graciously pleased to withdraw the extra police force in that county; whether he is aware of the favourable observations made on the subject by several grand jurors; and, whether any decision has been arrived at by the Irish Government as to the speedy withdrawal or reduction of the extra force?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The resolution referred to in the Question has not been brought to the notice of the Irish Government; but we have had under consideration proposals from the Divisional Magistrate with regard to the extra police in Clare, and I am glad to be in a position to say that His Excellency has seen his way to issue orders for the withdrawal from the county of 22 men sent there under the provisions of the Prevention of Crime Act, and for a reduction of 30 men of the force in the county under Section 13 of the Act 6 & 7 *Will.* IV., c. 13.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL—CENTRAL ELECTION COURTS—WEST DONEGAL.

Mr. KENNY asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Irish Boundary Commissioners, when they defined the proposed Parliamentary division of West Donegal, took into consideration the necessity of having within such division a suitable centre for nominating candidates, counting votes, and declaring the result in contested elections; if so, whether he can give the name of such urban centre, its population, and the nature of the accommodation provided for the contingencies specified; and, if no such centre is contained within the division, there will be a re-arrangement of the boundaries so as to include one?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: It formed no part of the duty of the Boundary Commissioners to take into consideration the necessity of having a suitable centre for holding the Election Courts for the divisions of counties formed by them. It will be seen, by reference to Clause 15 of the Bill, that the place of election is to be determined by the Local Authority empowered to appoint the polling districts; and the place of election need not be in the division itself, but may be in any town situate in the county at large, or in an adjoining county of a city or town.

Mr. HEALY: What is the Local Authority in Donegal?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: In England it is the Quarter Sessions.

Mr. HEALY: But in Donegal?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I am not acquainted with the arrangements in Ireland; but in England it is the Quarter Sessions.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—JAMES ELLIS FRENCH, LATE DETECTIVE DIRECTOR.

MR. JOHN REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Upon whose recommendation and under what circumstances James Ellis French, late detective director in the Royal Irish Constabulary, and at present undergoing a sentence of two years' imprisonment for unnatural offences, was promoted to be county inspector over the heads of officers senior to him in rank and service; did the Lord Lieutenant obtain authority; and, if so, in what manner, to increase the established number of county inspectors in Ireland by one, and was James Ellis French selected to fill the vacancy thus created; and, who was the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when this transaction took place?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A Committee which reported in March, 1882, on the pay and allowances of the officers of the Royal Irish Constabulary, recommended amongst other things that the officer selected for the post of Detective Director should, when so appointed, be made of the rank of County Inspector if he did not already hold that rank. The proposal was adopted by the Irish Government and the Treasury; and as legislative sanction was necessary, provision was accordingly made in a Bill which passed the same year to enable the Lord Lieutenant to create an additional County Inspector. In pursuance of this recommendation and provision, Mr. French, who had held the office of Detective Director for some time previously, was made a County Inspector in October, 1882.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my Question as to on whose recommendation French was selected?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Mr. French was discharging these functions at the time when the Committee recommended that the officer who held the office should have the rank of County Inspector; therefore, he was made County Inspector.

ARMY—PEAT-MOSS LITTER.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any experiments have been made in Cavalry Barracks in England or in Ireland for the purpose of testing the suitableness of peat-moss litter for horses; and, if so, whether the reports on such experiments are satisfactory?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Experiments have been made with peat-moss litter at various stations in Cavalry and other stables. The result has not been such as to lead to its adoption in this country.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether Irish or German moss was used?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON was understood to say that he did not know.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE BALLYFORAN MURDER CASE.

MR. SEXTON asked Mr. Soliciter General for Ireland, How long John Nolan and Laurence Hannon, accused of complicity in the Ballyforan murder case, and discharged from custody on Tuesday last at Carrick on Shannon, had been kept in prison without being brought to trial; why the Crown persisted in applying to enter a nolle prosequi, and refused to assent to the application of counsel for Laurence Hannon, who stated that—

"The prisoner had a number of witnesses who could conclusively establish his innocence, and he was most anxious for a full trial, to which he submitted he was in common justice entitled. His witnesses were now collected by the indefatigable exertions of his solicitor. He had no security that, if at some future period the Crown thought proper to rip up this charge again, his counsel and solicitors would be available or his witnesses alive;"

and, whether the Government will guarantee that the men discharged will not be further molested with respect to the abandoned accusation?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): Sir, John Nolan, Laurence Hannon, and Michael Tansey were committed for trial at the Summer Assizes of 1884. Tansey was then tried and convicted, and the other cases were adjourned. At the Winter Assizes, which was the next Commission, John Nolan was tried, with the result that the jury disagreed, and Laurence Hannon was then released on bail. The Attorney General has considered that, having regard to the disagreement of the jury, the case against Nolan need not be further proceeded with, and, fol-

lowing the usual precedent, a *nolle prosequi* was accordingly entered. There is no intention of putting either of the men on trial again.

Mr. SEXTON: May I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether that amounts to a declaration of the men's innocence?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker): No.

Mr. SEXTON: Well, then, I beg to give Notice that I will ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, Whether the Crown have kept these men in prison for months; and, whether, having refused them a trial which would prove their innocence, they now refuse to admit the innocence of these men?

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—OMAGH WORKHOUSE CHILDREN—WEARING OF SHOES AND STOCKINGS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Dr. Hans Fleming, Medical Officer of Omagh Workhouse, has lately advised the Omagh Board of Guardians, in an official report, to keep the female children in the workhouse barefooted; and, if so, whether the Local Government Board will continue Dr. Fleming in office as a fit person to be the Medical Officer of the Workhouse?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is true that Dr. Fleming has recently advised the Omagh Board of Guardians that, so far as health is concerned, children are quite as well, if not better, without shoes or stockings. The Local Government Board do not agree with him; but they do not think his having expressed the opinion he entertains when called upon to do so affords any reason for removing him from his position. The Guardians are not bound to be governed by his opinion on such a point.

Mr. MACARTNEY: Is it not the fact that a large number of children, the sons and daughters of ratepayers in Ireland, are accustomed to go barefooted?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes.

Mr. CALLAN asked whether the majority of the Guardians who were in favour of keeping the children barefooted were not the constituents of the hon. Member?

Mr. SEXTON asked whether, if the children of ratepayers went barefooted, it was not because their parents had to pay rack rents?

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY asked whether it was not usual even for grown-up persons in country districts to carry their shoes and stockings in their hands, and to put them on when they got near the town?

[No reply.]

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—SCRUTINY OF VOTES.

Mr. DEASY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the great complaints made after last year's election of Poor Law Guardians in Ireland of the action of the returning officers, and of the many cases in which the Local Government Board was obliged to set aside the elections and direct new ones to be held, and also of the many difficult legal points which arise at the elections, the Local Government Board will this year take steps to ensure that the returning officers will not be allowed to conduct the scrutiny of the votes in secrecy, but will conduct the scrutiny in the presence of the candidates and their legal advisers?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Local Government Board have recently re-issued instructions to Returning Officers in which they state that, in reference to the examination and casting-up of the votes, they are not prepared to deprive the Returning Officer of a discretion in regard to the admission or exclusion of strangers, inasmuch as the exercise of such a discretion may, on some occasions, be necessary to the proper discharge of his duty; but, on the other hand, the Board think that if the Returning Officer excludes from the examination of the voting papers for a particular electoral division either the candidates for that electoral division or those who proposed them, he should be prepared to show some urgent reason for a step which, generally speaking, would seem to be unnecessary or unreasonable. The Local Government Board do not think it advisable or necessary to interfere further with the discretion of the Returning Officers in this respect, or to make an order compelling them to admit the candidates' legal advisers on these occasions.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD, R.M.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Government has yet decided what to do with Mr. Clifford Lloyd, ex-resident magistrate; and, if it is proposed to reinstate him in his former position, in what part of Ireland will he be located? I would also like to ask the right hon. Gentleman what salary Mr. Lloyd will receive?

MR. O'BRIEN: Before this Question is answered, I would like to know whether it is a fact within the knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman that Mr. Clifford Lloyd objects to return to Ireland?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not aware of the amount of Mr. Clifford Lloyd's salary. Mr. Lloyd still holds the office of Resident Magistrate. He has been on sick leave for some time, but will shortly return to his duties in a district in the North of Ireland.

MR. O'BRIEN: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my Question, whether it is within his own knowledge that Mr. Clifford Lloyd objects to returning?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not suppose it is a matter to be taken very much into account what the particular wish of the Resident Magistrate is.

MR. O'BRIEN: Well, I will inquire to-morrow as to the fact.

POST OFFICE—UNSTAMPED LETTERS FROM EGYPT.

MR. TOMLINSON asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is the fact that, owing to the impossibility of procuring postage stamps in the Egyptian desert, letters from the Troops in Egypt are sent home without prepayment of postage; whether the relatives and friends of the soldiers are required to pay double postage on receipt of such letters; and, whether he will take any steps to remedy this hardship and injustice?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: It is certainly the case that many letters from the British troops in Egypt reach this country without prepayment, owing, no doubt, to the difficulty of procuring postage stamps in the Egyptian Desert; but such letters are not, as the hon. Member seems to suppose, charged with double postage on delivery. The instructions are to charge such letters with the single rate of postage, as if they had been prepaid. On inquiry, I learn that a few letters have inadvertently been charged double postage, and in those cases the extra postage has been refunded. I have renewed the order, and hope no similar error will occur.

PRISONS (IRELAND) — DISMISSAL OF WARDERS AT MOUNTJOY PRISON.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the fact that five warders of Mountjoy Prison were summarily dismissed by the Hon. Charles Bourke because they respectfully protested against being compelled to carry out an order of so indecent and degrading a character that it is impossible publicly to describe it; did Mr. Bourke, immediately after dismissing the five warders, cause the order to be cancelled; did the officers subsequently apply to be reinstated; and, was this refused?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This Question, with some others, only appeared on the Paper on Saturday last. They involved local inquiry, and full information could not have been obtained by this time without, at any rate, disturbing the Sunday rest of many officials. I would ask hon. Members in all cases that are not urgent to give a longer interval than from Saturday to Monday.

MR. HEALY: The fate of five unfortunate warders who have been summarily dismissed by Mr. Bourke depends on this Question. ["Order, order!"] I will put it again.

PUBLIC HEALTH — IMPORTATION OF RAGS.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that, since the prohibition on the importation of French rags has been removed, a large number of bales of rags have been imported from French ports; and, whether he will take steps to see that such bales, coming from Foreign ports, will be disinfected before they are carried inland by rail, as it may be that they consist of accumulations of rags containing cholera germs?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: There is no doubt that a large number of bales of rags has been imported from French ports since our order expired on the 1st instant. We know of no instance of cholera being imported in rags, and we have allowed such a period to elapse since the date of the last known case of cholera in Europe as would materially reduce any possible danger. It does not appear that it would be further reduced by any of the customary processes of disinfection in use at English ports.

THE CURRENCY—VALUE OF SILVER.

Mr. COLERIDGE KENNARD asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in reference to his statement on March 5th that wage-earners to whom ten shillings are due now practically receive only seven shillings and five pence, Her Majesty's Government have in contemplation the introduction of any remedial measure calculated to allay the anxiety naturally evoked in the minds of the working classes by his said declaration?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I must point out to the hon. Gentleman that he has not correctly quoted my words. What I said the other night was that the intrinsic value of 10*s.* in silver coins was only 7*s.* 5*d.*, not that the wage-earner to whom 10*s.* was due practically received only 7*s.* 5*d.* When the hon. Gentleman is paid £5 by means of a bank-note, he receives what is intrinsically worth less than a farthing; but it is really worth £5, because it is a convertible legal tender for a payment of £5; and 10*s.* in silver are worth 10*s.* for the same reason. As I said before, I do not believe that any person belonging to the working classes requires to have his mind relieved of these matters; and I shall certainly not introduce what the hon. Gentleman calls a "remedial measure."

POST OFFICE COLOUR OF POSTAGE STAMPS.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware of the great inconvenience caused in consequence of the postage stamps being now all printed of one colour; whether the object of such alteration is economy; and, if so, whether that is a sufficient reason to disregard the convenience of the public, and increase the difficulties of the Post Office officials; and, whether he will give orders to return to the different colours for different denominations of stamps?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: In reply to the hon. Member, I beg to say that the inconvenience to which he refers, connected with the present series of postage stamps, has for some time past occupied my attention, and that the matter is now being carefully considered by a Departmental Committee, whose Report I expect to receive shortly.

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE KENSINGTON UNION INFIRMARY.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the President of the Local Government Board, Why, since the 1st January, the Kensington Infirmary has been closed against the parishioners on Wednesdays; and, whether the master of the workhouse adjoining labours under any special restrictions preventing him from allowing aged inmates being seen by near relatives at other than visiting times?

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL: It rests with the Board of Guardians to make such regulations as they may deem desirable as to the admission of visitors to the infirmary and the workhouse. As regards the infirmary, since the 1st of January there has been only one general weekly visiting day—namely, Sunday—but in all cases of dangerous illness visitors are allowed on any day and at any hour; and, should they so desire, the relatives or friends of a dying patient are allowed to remain with him without any limitation of time. With respect to the workhouse, there are certain rules laid down by the Guardians as to the visitation of inmates. The master is allowed a discretionary power of permitting a special visit to an inmate under exceptional circumstances on any day at a reasonable hour; but this would not extend to his allowing the friends of a particular inmate regularly to visit at times other than those allowed by the Guardians.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—RIGHT OF SUPPRESSING PUBLIC MEETINGS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,

Whether he will now, according to his engagement, cite either the Statutes or the judicial pronouncements upon which he relies in support of his statement that magistrates in Ireland have powers to prevent a lawful assembly or procession, which are not vested in magistrates in Great Britain?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): One of the judgments referred to is a judgment of Lord Chancellor Law, in which he says—

"The defendant was not to defer action until a breach of the peace had actually been committed. His paramount duty was to preserve the peace unbroken, and that by whatever means were available for the purpose. Furthermore, the duty of a Justice of the Peace being to preserve the peace unbroken, he is, of course, entitled, and, in fact, bound to intervene the moment he has reasonable apprehensions of a breach of the peace being imminent; and therefore he must, in such cases, necessarily act on his own reasonable and *bonâ fide* belief as to what is likely to occur."

MR. O'KELLY asked whether the only disturbers of the meeting in the case to which Lord Chancellor Law referred were the magistrates and the police?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that he assumed when a Judge interpreted the law he correctly stated the facts.

POST OFFICE—ACCELERATION OF THE MAILS TO SOUTH-WEST OF SCOTLAND AND BELFAST.

SIR JOHN HAY asked the Postmaster General a Question, of which he had given private Notice, with reference to certain information laid on the Table—namely, Whether he was able to give any information with reference to the acceleration of the Irish mails between the South-West of Scotland and the North of Ireland by way of the Stranraer and Larne route?

MR SHAW LEFEVRE said, that the arrangements he had made did not contemplate any such extension; but he would be receiving a deputation from Belfast next day, and he would hear what they had to say in favour of the Larne and Stranraer route.

EXCISE LICENCES (SCOTLAND).

MR. CRAIG-SELLAR asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, When the Return (No. 316) on Excise Licences (Scotland), which was ordered to be printed on July 31st 1884, will be circulated?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, the Return would be circulated in a few days. It was prepared some time ago; but its completion was delayed in consequence of a Return not being received from one of the counties.

IRELAND—ARRAN ISLANDS AND GALWAY DISPENSARY DISTRICTS.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What are the grounds of the refusal of the Local Government Board to make the dispensary districts of the Arran Islands and Galway again separate; whether the amalgamation took place in September 1883 in consequence of a resolution passed at the instance of the Local Government Board by the Galway Board of Guardians in August 1883; whether, since that period, the Islanders and the Galway Board of Guardians have both asked that the amalgamation should cease; whether the Galway Board of Guardians has made this request on two or three occasions; whether the present arrangement throws an increased expenditure of £70 yearly on the Galway Dispensary, and thus affords a large relief to the owners of property at Arran, at the expense of the ratepayers of Galway; and, whether, as the original arrangement was made in accordance with a resolution of the Galway Board, and at the wish of the Islanders, the change will be made which is demanded by the same parties?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have received a letter from the Rev. Mr. O'Donoghue, parish priest of Arran, on the subject referred to in this Question, and am at present in communication with the Local Government Board about it.

NORTH BORNEO.

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government now regard North Borneo as under British Sovereignty; and, if so, when and in what manner such Sovereignty was acquired?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government do not regard

North Borneo as being under British Sovereignty.

ISLANDS OF THE WESTERN PACIFIC—SAMOA AND TONGA

Mr. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the documents alleged to record the assurances of the German Government to respect the independence of Samoa and Tonga consist of statements by Lord Granville that Count Munster said the German Government were willing to enter into negotiation on the subject; whether Lord Granville's statements would be held by the German Government to be binding upon them; and, whether there is any document binding on the German Government in which an undertaking is given on their part to respect the independence of Samoa and Tonga?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The documents referred to do not consist solely of the statements made by Count Munster. I beg again to refer the hon. and learned Member to No. 177 in the recent Colonial Blue Book, c. 4,273, where it is stated that Prince Bismarck had assured Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin that he had no intention of sanctioning the annexation of Samoa or the establishment of a German Protectorate there, and that the German Government would adhere strictly to the terms of the agreement with Her Majesty's Government. They hold this promise to be amply sufficient.

Mr. GORST: Will the noble Lord say by whom the statement was made?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: It is in the despatches of Sir Edward Malet.

Mr. GORST: Am I right in understanding that there is no document in the possession of Her Majesty's Government which is signed by any German officer?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: There is no Treaty or Convention.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (WALES).

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he is now able to inform the House when the Bill dealing with the question of Intermediate Education in Wales will be introduced, and if the Government will use their best endeavours to deal with that question during the present Session of Parliament?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have a very strong sympathy with the subject alluded to in the hon. Member's Question, and a great sense of its importance; but I must wait until I obtain further light in regard to the progress of the Seats Bill and other Business before I can presume to give the hon. Member any confident answer.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir EDWARD J. REED: I wish to ask my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, who has the first place on the Paper for a Motion on going into Committee of Supply on the Navy Estimates, Whether, in view of the scope and character of the Motion of which I have given Notice, he will be good enough to make way by withdrawing his Motion, and giving precedence to that of which I have given Notice?

Dr. CAMERON: I have very carefully read my hon. Friend's Motion, and it appears to me to look so very much like a Vote of Censure that I am convinced that if proper representations are made to the Prime Minister he will readily afford proper facilities for its discussion. Such facilities I could not hope to obtain for my own Motion. There are four other Members whose Notices on going into Supply have priority over that of my hon. Friend; and having secured the first place, and without attaching exaggerated importance to my own Motion, I must reluctantly decline to give way.

Sir EDWARD J. REED said, that, under those circumstances, he would on Thursday ask the Prime Minister, in view of the character of his Motion, and its relation to the Navy and Admiralty, whether he would give facilities for bringing it on?

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—NEWTOWN HAMILTON PETTY SESSIONS—MR. STARR.

Mr. BERESFORD asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What was the reply given by the authorities in Ireland to a question of which notice was given by the honourable Member for Cavan on the 19th February, viz.:

"Whether it is a fact that a man named Starr, recently appointed Clerk of the Petty Sessions at Newtown Hamilton, has been three times convicted of drunkenness in Armagh; and, if so, whether he will have the appointment cancelled;"

and, whether there is the slightest foundation for this allegation against the character of Mr. Starr?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I informed the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), by letter, of the result of the inquiries I made in this case; but I am glad to have the opportunity of publicly stating that there was no foundation whatever for the allegation against the character of Mr. Starr, which is quoted in the present Question.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE PUMPS FOR THE SOUDAN.

MR. BROADHURST said, he begged to ask the Surveyor General of Ordnance a Question of which he had given him private Notice. It had reference to a Question addressed to the hon. Gentleman the other day with regard to the supply of pumps for the Soudan, and was, Whether he had received any communication in regard to that subject from any member of the trade in England?

MR. BRAND: Yes, Sir. We have received at the War Office a letter from a well-known firm in Birmingham—Messrs. Tangye—[*loud laughter*]—I do not know what politics have to do with the supply of any material for the use of the Army. I wish I had had it in my hands when I was pressed on the subject the other night by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire. The letter is addressed to the Secretary of State for War, and is as follows:—

"My Lord,—In common with other makers of steam pumps, I confess I was much concerned to find that a large order for these machines had been given to a foreign firm at a time when the English machine trade is suffering from an almost unparalleled depression. Like many other firms, we have been keeping a large number of men employed in making for stock, hoping for better times, and have a large number of pumps on hand which we should have been glad to have sold to the Department. An inquiry was made, and I have to-day ascertained that the duty required of the pumps in question is so great that there is not the slightest chance of any suitable for the work being found in stock in England, and many months would be required to make them. Under these circumstances, I can only congratulate the War Department on being so fortunate as to find the pumps ready to hand."

MR. J. LOWTHER: I wish to ask whether the writer of that letter is the same person whose name cropped up in connection with the Aston disturbances?

[No reply.]

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. MACFARLANE said, he wished to put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman with reference to the Business for Wednesday next. His (Mr. Macfarlane's) Bill—the Suspension of Evictions (Scotland) Bill—occupied the first place for that day; and his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, and the hon. Member for Ross-shire, had Bills which they had taken off the Paper for the purpose of allowing that Bill to occupy the first place on Wednesday. He saw that the candidate for the City of Glasgow had put that Bill into his election address, showing the importance attached to it in Scotland. Petitions had been sent in on the subject; and he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it was his intention to allow that Bill, which consisted of six lines, and need not take one hour for second reading, whether he would allow it to come on, or whether it was his intention to put down, under the Resolution of the House, the Redistribution Bill as the first Order on that day?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he had only to refer to the answer he gave 10 days or a week ago to his hon. Friend the Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) with regard to a Bill in which many persons took a great interest. He really had no choice whatever. It would be a breach of the engagement with the House were he to make exceptions to that rule with regard to particular Bills. It was intended to put down the Redistribution Bill for Wednesday, and he could not make an exception in favour of the Suspension of Evictions (Scotland) Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked the right hon. Gentleman when the Navy Estimates would be taken?

MR. GLADSTONE said, it depended on the progress made that night with the Supplementary Army Estimates. When the latter were concluded, it was intended to take the remaining Civil Votes. He was not without hope that the Navy Estimates might be reached on Wednesday.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES (SUPPLEMENTARY), 1884-5.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

ARMY, 1884-5.

ADDITIONAL NUMBER OF MEN.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in rising to move—

"That a further number of Land Forces, not exceeding 3,000 men (all ranks), be maintained for the service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, at Home and Abroad, during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885,"

said: Although the Resolution to be put from the Chair is only for additional men, it will, I think, be convenient that I should make a short statement upon the subject of these Supplemental Estimates, both as to men and to money; and perhaps it would be most convenient, before I refer to the Vote for additional men, that I should first refer to the Money Vote before the Committee. The Members of the Committee will have seen that the Estimate is divided into two portions—namely, £270,000 for what may be called the ordinary Services, and £672,000, which is the sum required in connection with the operations in the Soudan. It will probably not be necessary for me to say anything on this occasion as to the addition of £270,000 to the ordinary Estimates. That sum is required almost, if not quite, entirely for additional expenditure under Vote 12 for warlike supplies. Various circumstances, into the details of which I need not now enter, have retarded the proper provision of warlike supplies of various kinds for some time, especially the provision of larger powder used for heavy guns, of which there was not a large store, and for which, it was stated, last year, a large order had been given. If any further explanation should be required as to the details of this expenditure, my hon. Friend the Surveyor General of the Ordnance Mr. Brand will be able to give it better than I can. As to the war expenditure of £672,000, I wish to point out to the Committee that only the small sum of £15,000 is due to the past operations—that is to say, for the Suakin Campaign in the spring of last year, or the Nile Expedition that is now being conducted under Lord Wolseley's command. The sum the Committee will now be asked to vote includes a sum of £15,000 for gratuities to the troops engaged in the Suakin Expedition; and, with the exception of that sum, all the expenses of that Expedition have already been met by the Votes passed by the House. For the Nile Expedition, which is now in progress under Lord Wolseley, the Committee will remember that two sums of £300,000 and £1,000,000 have been already voted, the first in the form of a Vote of Credit, and the additional £1,000,000 in the Supplemental Estimate presented to the House in the Autumn Session of last year. Of course, I cannot speak, at the present moment, with absolute certainty on the subject; but there is every reason to believe that those two sums, amounting together to £1,300,000, will cover the whole cost of the Expedition up the Nile that will come in course of payment during the present year. I say I cannot speak with absolute certainty; but I believe it to be the opinion of my Financial Advisers that the fact I have stated may be relied upon. Of course, we have the means of knowing what amount of expenditure has been incurred in this country in providing supplies, and for boats and stores sent out for the purposes of the Expedition; and we have also the means of ascertaining, with very tolerable accuracy, what is the amount that has been expended in Egypt itself. The local expenditure has been met, and must be met, almost entirely by remittances from this country; and, therefore, I think there is very little reason to doubt that we are informed, with tolerable accuracy, at all events, as to what has been the expenditure in connection with that Expedition. I think, perhaps, when the Committee bear in mind the statements made from time to time in some of the newspapers respecting the enormous expenditure incurred for this Expedition—some persons putting it at many millions—it will be satisfactory to the Committee to know that the expenditure hitherto incurred in the Expedition will be almost entirely met by the sums already voted by Parliament. Well, Sir, the Committee also is not asked to vote anything more for prospective operations on the Nile. It will be the duty of the Govern-

ment as soon as possible to frame and to present to the House an Estimate of all the expenditure which, in their judgment, will be necessary in connection with the continuation and probable extension of the operations now being carried on by Lord Wolseley. As I have said, the sums which have already been provided meet the expenditure up to the end of the current year. It will be desirable, before presenting further Estimates or a Vote of Credit to the House, that we should have an opportunity of forming the most accurate estimate we can of the probable expenditure at a later date; and I shall not attempt, until it is absolutely necessary, to state to the House what further sum it will be necessary for us to ask for. Under the circumstances, perhaps it might not be necessary for me to say anything further, at this stage, respecting the Nile Expedition. Certainly, in the few observations which I shall venture to address to the Committee on that subject, I shall endeavour to abstain altogether from re-opening, as far as I am concerned, any of those subjects of controversy which we discussed at considerable length a short time ago. But I am unwilling to pass by the Nile Expedition altogether on such an occasion as this without saying a few words to express the sense I feel, the sense the Government feel, and the sense I am sure the whole House and the country feel, with regard to the conduct of the General Officer in command, the officers under him, and the non-commissioned officers and men who have taken part in that campaign. We, all of us, share the disappointment, to which Lord Wolseley has given expression in a recent General Order to the troops, at their failure to secure the main object of the Expedition—namely, to relieve their gallant comrade and countryman, General Gordon; and while we share that disappointment, we desire that they should feel assured that we acquit them of all blame for having failed in that object, and also that we feel under the greatest obligations to them for the exertions they have made and the sacrifices they have undergone. As to the plan of campaign, I do not think it is necessary that I should say much now. No doubt, the difficulty of ascending the Nile has caused a longer delay in the operations than was anticipated; but I do not think that even now, after the experience we have gained, there is any reason to doubt that the plan adopted by Lord Wolseley was the best, and probably the only practicable one. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statement made by Lord Wolseley in the despatch which has been laid upon the Table of the House, in which he says that he was satisfied that the plan of ascending the Nile by means of small-built boats was a success. He uses this expression—

"In fact, our small English-built boats have been, so far, a complete success, and without them it would have been simply impossible for the Expedition to have reached Korti, or to have made any provision for the relief of Khartoum."

Without dwelling any further on the plan of operations, which might give rise to differences of opinion among the Members of the Committee, I will pass on to the conduct of the troops engaged in this Expedition, as to which there can be no difference at all. Lord Wolseley says in the same despatch which I have just quoted—

"Although the physical obstacles encountered in the ascent of the Nile above the Second Cataract have been considerable, and although the labour of surmounting the many Cataracts between Sarras and Hannek has tested, to a remarkable degree, the strength and endurance of the troops, the advance of the boats up the river has been accomplished in a manner which has reflected the highest credit upon all ranks, and has conclusively proved, if proof were wanting, that Her Majesty's soldiers of to-day possess all that strength of body and that military pride and regimental spirit for which the British Army has been long renowned."

Since that time Lord Wolseley has had to call upon his men for the display of other qualities in addition to those of strength and endurance. Very shortly after that despatch was written they had to prove, not only their strength and endurance, but their courage and bravery in action. The accounts which we have received of the battle of Abu Klea recently, and which are fuller than those previously published, I think the Committee will be satisfied fully support the words both of Sir Herbert Stewart and of Lord Wolseley, which appear in the despatches of those gallant officers. Sir Herbert Stewart says—

"It has been my duty to command a force from which exceptional work, exceptional hardships, and, it may be added, exceptional fighting has been asked. It would be impossible for me adequately to describe the admirable support

that has been given to me by every officer and man of the Force."

Lord Wolseley says—

"All ranks have displayed that discipline and those high fighting qualities for which Her Majesty's Army has always been renowned."

The newspaper reports show that the Forces under the gallant and lamented General Earle displayed just as high military qualities as those exhibited by the men under the command of General Stewart, of whom I have already spoken. Passing, with those observations, from the operations on the Nile, I shall now endeavour to state what are the present proposals of Her Majesty's Government, and what is involved in them. We have not concealed our opinion that, in the circumstances in which we find ourselves placed, by the betrayal of General Gordon and the consequent fall of Khartoum, an ultimate advance to and the recapture of that place and the destruction of the Mahdi's power will probably be necessary. [Lord EDWARD CECIL: Probably?] Yes, probably. But the Supplementary Estimates the Committee are now asked to vote do not necessarily commit and do not pledge the Committee to the prosecution of that policy. The measures which we are now asking the Committee to sanction, and which are involved in the adoption of this Vote, are measures which, in our own opinion, are required whether the House should ultimately sanction the policy or not, which we have laid before the House, of an advance upon Khartoum. Before Lord Wolseley was in full possession of the views of the Government, and when he was discussing the probability of doing, as a matter of choice, that which subsequent events compelled him to do as a matter of necessity—namely, to go into summer quarters in certain positions between Dongola and Korti, and before he was in possession of our views as to the necessity of an advance on Khartoum, he stated that, in his opinion, the first measure that it was absolutely necessary to take in order to secure the safety of his Army was the despatch of an Expedition to Suakin to disperse the Forces under Osman Digna. If Lord Wolseley is not to abandon the Nile, but is to advance upon Khartoum and destroy the power of the Mahdi, it is obviously necessary that a large Force threatening his left flank should be dispersed. It would not be consistent with the safety of Lord Wolseley's Army that, while engaged in attacking the unknown numbers of the Mahdi's Forces, he should be exposed to a considerable Force from Suakin, threatening his communications, and attacking him on his left flank. Therefore we have sent, and are sending, and we ask the Committee by this Vote to sanction, an Expedition to Suakin, under General Sir Gerald Graham, to disperse the Forces of Osman Digna. That Expedition will consist of about 12,000 men, including those who are already at Suakin; and its composition will be as follows:—Of the British troops there will be four squadrons of Cavalry, one battery of Horse Artillery, one screw-gun battery; three companies of Engineers, one railway company, besides telegraph and balloon detachments; three battalions of Foot Guards, three battalions of Infantry of the Line, besides one of Marines, together with the necessary Commissariat, Transport, and Medical Staff. There will, in addition, be an Indian Contingent which is coming from India, which consists of one regiment of Cavalry, three battalions of Infantry, and one company of Sappers. There will also be the New South Wales Contingent, which will consist of 800 men, making the whole Force something over 12,000, and the immediate object of this Army will be to disperse the Forces under Osman Digna. When it has achieved that object, it will hold the principal positions in the country hitherto occupied by Osman Digna, and will prevent a renewal of his power—such a renewed concentration of his Forces as took place after the battle of El Teb and the operations near Suakin last year. It will also open the route to Berber, as far as it is possible for it to be opened; and in the event of Lord Wolseley's further advance upon Berber and Khartoum it will co-operate with him. In order to complete these operations it is proposed immediately to commence a railway from Suakin to Berber. The plant for a section has already been sent out, and the material for another section of the same length has been ordered, and will be sent out without loss of time. I understand that the portion of this Vote which is to be chiefly resisted to-night is that which has to be put down for

the commencement of this railway; but I must acknowledge that I am somewhat at a loss to understand on what ground the opposition is based by those who admit the necessity of any operations of this character at all. It will be undertaken essentially as a military weapon, and a military operation, in aid of a military object. In the event of a combined operation by way of the Nile and by Suakin and Berber on Khartoum, the construction of the railway, if possible, as far as Berber would be an enormous advantage. We hope it will be constructed, and if it were constructed I think it would go very far to insure the absolute success of such an operation. If that is not possible, under the conditions in which we are placed, the construction of a railway for a shorter distance will be, I admit, a loss, but still a distinct and substantial, advantage. The country which intervenes between Suakin and Berber, although it contains a certain number of wells, is a desert. The first portion of it is rocky and mountainous; the last portion—at least, 100 miles of it—is sandy; but through the whole length of the route it is but indifferently supplied with water, and it affords no provision or supply for an army advancing through it. Lord Wolseley has lately estimated the loss of camels, in desert marching, at 5 per cent for every 100 miles. It is obvious, therefore, I think, that every mile this railway is constructed from Suakin will be of immense advantage to any force that is advancing from Suakin in the direction of the Nile, even if it is not found possible to make it for more than a limited distance. Even in the event of the Suakin route to Berber not being used at all, still, for the purpose of supplying the troops who will have to occupy positions in this portion of the country in order to prevent the renewed concentration of troops under Osman Digna, it will be of the greatest possible advantage, and, in my opinion, almost an absolute necessity. The terms of the agreement which has been made with the contractors, Messrs. Lucas and Aird, are before the Committee. From them the Committee will see that the character of the work is purely military. It is to be carried on for military purposes, under military supervision, in accordance with, and in subordination to, military requirements. We are not, as I have already said, indifferent to the possible advantages which may be conferred upon the country by the construction of the railway as a permanent work; but that is not the object we are asking the Committee to sanction in the present case. A question has been asked as to the great importance of the improvement of the Nile railway, and of the communications by means of the Nile. That part of the subject has not been neglected. Although Lord Wolseley has asked that the Suakin line should be constructed, he attaches equal importance—if not greater importance—in fact, he does attach greater importance—to the development of the means of communication by the Nile route. Upon a requisition which we have received from him, which will be before the House in a few days, materials have been ordered for the extension of 40 or 50 miles of the existing railway from Sarrass to Terket, which will enable a considerable number of the worst Cataracts of the Nile to be turned, and will give greater facilities for conveying supplies to the troops. Materials will also be sent out for constructing light tramways round some other Cataracts which exist in the neighbourhood of Dongola. Lord Wolseley has also asked for a number of steamboats of various descriptions, and of light draught, suitable for Nile navigation. Steps are being taken, without delay, to supply these requirements; but the Committee will not be asked to provide any part of the payment for these preparations, because they will not come in course of payment during the present financial year. I think it is only necessary further to give some explanation as to the additional men. We are asking the Committee at present to vote 3,000 men in addition to those who were voted in the ordinary Estimates of the present financial year. This is the number by which we think it is probable that the number voted by Parliament will be actually exceeded within the limits of the present year; and the sum of £10,000, which was taken for recruiting in the Supplementary Estimates under Vote I., will, it is believed, cover the excess payment which will be involved in the present year. The actual numbers were, during

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a considerable portion of the financial year, below the numbers voted by Parliament; and it was, I think, only in the last month of the year that the numbers actually exceeded the establishment. It will be premature to state what will be the total increase in the numbers of the Army which we should ask for in consequence of these operations for the next financial year; but the sum of £10,000 already voted by Parliament will, it is thought, cover the payment of troops in the present year. The number of 15,000 has been mentioned, and that is about the number which would be involved, and to which the men actually under orders at the present time might have to be increased. Although the Committee is not asked to sanction this addition to the numbers of the Army, it would be desirable that I should state at once what are the measures which have been and which are being taken with respect to the regimental establishments. There are at present 15 regiments of the Line which have both their battalions abroad. In these regiments transfer to the Reserve is now suspended. By the suspension of transfer to the Reserve one of the greatest sources of depletion to the regimental establishments will be temporarily suspended; but those battalions will, of course, notwithstanding this circumstance, require drafts to supply casualties in the field and casualties caused by invaliding. These drafts will be provided from men left behind in depôts, and who, though not sufficiently trained to accompany their regiments abroad, are, of course, daily completing their course of instruction, and are fit to serve in the draft. They will also be supplied by the volunteers from the Reserve who are being called up, and who are, when their services are required, collected together at the regimental depôts. It will also be necessary to make provision for the large drain which will come upon these regiments as soon as the campaign is over. As soon as the campaign is over the transfer of men to the Reserve will be resumed; and, of course, both battalions would very soon lose a large number of their seasoned soldiers. It is necessary to make provision for all these contingencies; and in the case of regiments with both battalions abroad, it is necessary, under the scheme of the present territorial organization, to raise the strength of the regimental depôts to the establishment of 600 men. That increase in regard to these 15 regiments will cause an increase in the establishment of 8,000 men. In addition to that, as the battalions sent abroad are those highest on the roster and highest on the Home establishment, those which are left behind are those with the lowest establishment. As the highest establishment battalions are those sent abroad, it is considered necessary to raise the establishment of those next on the roster to a corresponding rank, in order to take the place of those which are gone, and, if necessary, to provide reinforcements as they are required. For every battalion which is sent abroad, therefore, it is necessary to raise the Home battalion from the lowest to the highest establishment. That process will require another 2,600 men. By these two processes an addition of 10,600 men will be required. The other additions necessary will be in the Foot Guards, of whom three battalions have gone to Suakin, and they will require either depôts or a corresponding increase in the battalions which are left behind. They will require depôts, or an increase in the Home battalions of the regiment of 300 each; that will amount to 900 men. There are also already serving in the Camel Corps with Lord Wolseley 280 men taken from the battalions of Guards. Authority was at once given to replace these men on the establishment, so that the total addition to the Foot Guards will be 1,180 men. There is an addition also to the establishment of the Cavalry. The 19th Hussars are in Egypt, and that regiment will require a depôt estimated at 110 men. There are also the men who have been drained from the various Cavalry regiments at home for service abroad. Authority has already been given to replace these men, and that will involve a further addition of 760 men. Thus the total increase to the Cavalry under the measures already taken will be 870. Then there are several companies of Engineers which are on active service. They will have to be raised to their war establishment, which will cause an addition of 500 men to that corps. There are, besides, minor increases in the establishment, which I do not think it is necessary that I should

explain to the Committee at the present time.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: Is there any increase in the Artillery?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No, Sir; there is no increase in the Artillery at present contemplated. The only other subject to which I need refer in this Supplementary Estimate is the Militia. As I have already shown, the number of this branch of the Service ordinarily at home has been very much diminished by the requirements of these operations; and it is necessary, in order that the ordinary garrison duty required at home should not fall too heavily on the remaining men, and that the military instruction should be conducted as usual, that some relief should be given in the performance of ordinary garrison duty. It is, therefore, proposed to embody at once two small brigades of Artillery and six battalions of Militia. That is all the House is asked to sanction at present. If further explanations are required I will endeavour to give them; but I have said all that is necessary for me in moving the Supplementary Estimates which are now on the Table of the House.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a further number of Land Forces, not exceeding 3,000 men (all ranks), be maintained for the service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, at Home and Abroad, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1885."—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, there were one or two points in the statement of the noble Marquess upon which he desired to say a few words. The noble Marquess had stated that the Nile Expedition experienced great difficulty and great delay, owing to the difficulties that had to be overcome in the ascent of the river. But there was strong evidence that the delay in ascending the river was caused by the dilatoriness of Her Majesty's Government in sending out the Expedition. Lord Wolseley, in a despatch which was quoted the other day, expressed his deep regret that the Expedition had not started from England a month earlier. What, however, he wished to lay before the Committee was the apparent purposelessness of the Expedition to Suakin, as at present designed. They had been given to understand, from the statement of the noble Marquess, that the policy of the Expedition was practically to be one of massacre and retire. Osman Digna's Force was to be smashed, and his concentration in the future was to be prevented. That concentration would have been prevented, and would have been impossible, if General Graham's Forces had not been recalled as they were last March; and it was only to be prevented now by a great sacrifice of blood and money, by an Expedition of 12,000 of the choicest troops of the Empire. What he desired information upon chiefly now had reference to the position of the town and garrison of Kassala. There were 25,000 human beings at Kassala, for whose safety Her Majesty's Government were responsible; but it would seem that they had been deliberately abandoned by the policy of the Government to massacre and slavery. It had been stated in "another place," by an important Member of the Government, that Kassala was "outside the sphere of the operations of Her Majesty's troops." But Kassala could be relieved from Suakin or from Massowah; and if this great Expedition of 12,000 men, embracing a considerable contingent from Her Majesty's Indian Army, was to have any practical result whatever, it was clear that the relief of Kassala ought to be included in its operations. He had stated that Her Majesty's Government were responsible for the present condition of Kassala. It would be remembered that, owing to the policy pursued by the Ministry, the Egyptian Army was partially destroyed, and subsequently disbanded; so that the only means by which the Khedive could have relieved the suffering garrison of Kassala was destroyed by the operations of Her Majesty's Government. By an act of policy, for which the Government were clearly responsible, they had prevented the Khedive from obtaining that assistance from his Sovereign, the Sultan of Turkey, which he was anxious to obtain, which he asked to be allowed to obtain, and which would have enabled the garrisons in the Eastern Soudan to have been relieved in time and with success. Very piteous appeals were now coming from Suakin and Massowah in regard to the 25,000 persons whose lives

were at stake; and yet precisely the same policy was being pursued by Her Majesty's Ministers which had been so fatal in the case of Sinkat, Berber, and Khartoum. There had been the same warnings in regard to Kassala which they had had in reference to Sinkat and Berber last February and March; and yet the Government were absolutely taking no steps whatever for the relief of these 25,000 persons. Indeed, a Member of Her Majesty's Government in "another place" was not ashamed to state that measures for the relief of Kassala were outside the sphere of the operations of Her Majesty's troops. He ventured to think that that statement was the death warrant of those 25,000 people in Kassala, or a large portion of them. Hitherto every garrison which had fallen, and every town which had been taken by the Mahdi, had been given over to inhuman butchery. ["No!"] He should like to know when there had been an exception? [Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: At Khartoum.] The hon. Gentleman opposite said "Khartoum;" but the evidence was very strong indeed that the taking of Khartoum by the Forces of the Mahdi resulted in a scene of horrible carnage and butchery. The evidence to that effect was overwhelmingly strong—namely, that all those who had been faithful to General Gordon and had assisted him in his defence of Khartoum were ruthlessly slaughtered. It was known that 5,000 persons were massacred at Berber. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The Prime Minister gave an indignant protest; but General Gordon stated this distinctly in one of his despatches. [Mr. GLADSTONE again dissented.] What evidence could satisfy the Prime Minister? What evidence had the Government to the contrary? What evidence would they put against the statement of General Gordon, who was nearer the scene of operations than anybody else, and had the best means of obtaining information? It was well known that Berber was taken by storm, and they knew that there were large masses of refugees there, besides the garrison, and that those who were not given over to massacre had been sold into slavery. He should like to know what evidence Her Majesty's Government could produce in refutation of that statement? The evidence was perfectly clear that what happened at Sinkat, where the entire Force was slaughtered, had also taken place at Berber, where, to quote Gordon's own words, "5,000 were massacred." And what happened at Khartoum? There, again, the evidence was conclusive that the garrison and the inhabitants who were friendly to General Gordon met a similar fate. It had been clearly shown, from their past policy, that Her Majesty's Government were responsible for the safety of these towns, and for the disasters which had happened. The Prime Minister was peculiarly responsible, because it was his declarations in regard to the abandonment of the Soudan which had led to all these misfortunes. Very remarkable indeed was the information which came the other day from Cairo, and which was well worthy the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. It came from *The Times* Correspondent, who stated that—

"Two tribes in the neighbourhood of Korti recently friendly, have declared for the Mahdi. This change, necessitating our retirement to Dongola, is the first direct result of Mr. Gladstone's fatal declaration, which has increased 50 per cent the difficulties of our task and the dangers of our troops. Lord Wolseley's sensible speech to General Gordon's men was an unavailing effort to counteract the effect of that declaration. With some pardonable excitement, the persons in Cairo who have relations and friends in the British Forces ask whether nothing can be done to prevent the safety of our troops from being imperilled by the acts of the English Cabinet."

The speech in question was one in which Lord Wolseley assured the Soudanese troops that Her Majesty's Government intended to retake Khartoum and destroy the Mahdi, and, if necessary, they would remain there for 100 years. No one could blame Lord Wolseley, in the difficult position in which he found himself, for using language which might, perhaps, seem to hon. Members living in security here somewhat hyperbolical and strained. It was, however, no doubt, language that it was necessary to use in order to counteract the injurious effects of the statements of the Prime Minister. It was curious and remarkable how the same fatal effect had been produced at Suakin with regard to the fate and fortunes of the garrison of Kassala by the rash words of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. GLADSTONE: What words?

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: The words were not referred to directly in the despatch; but he had not the

slightest doubt that it meant the statement of the Prime Minister on the opening day of the present Sitting after the holidays, when he said that the Government still adhered to their policy of the evacuation or the abandonment of the Soudan. This the right hon. Gentleman afterwards endeavoured to explain away, or walk round, by stating that he did not mean abandonment.

MR. GLADSTONE: I never said it at all.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that he certainly should be sorry indeed to do what the right hon. Gentleman did, and endeavour to make it appear that the important utterances he had delivered in the House had no meaning whatever. It would be in the recollection of the House that on the first night of the Session the Prime Minister stated that the Government still adhered to the policy of evacuation or abandonment. It would also be in the distinct recollection of the House that on a later occasion, to the intense surprise of hon. Members, the right hon. Gentleman stated that he had never referred to the evacuation of the Soudan by the British troops, but that he only meant the evacuation of Egypt.

MR. GLADSTONE: I shall be obliged if the hon. Gentleman, when he chooses to make references to what has fallen from me, will not make every one of those references substantially inaccurate.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he would repeat his statement in order that it might be substantially verified. It was that on the first night of the Session the Prime Minister said that the Government still adhered to their original and consistent policy of evacuation. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was in the recollection of the House. On a subsequent occasion, three or four days later, when the attention of the right hon. Gentleman was called to the speech, the right hon. Gentleman said that he had never alluded to the policy of evacuation by the British troops, but that he had only spoken of the policy of evacuation by Egypt. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was quite prepared to submit the substantial accuracy of these quotations to subsequent verification by the right hon. Gentleman, or by hon. Gentlemen who so rashly cheered him from below the Gangway. There was another statement, to which he desired to call attention, which coincided with the passage he had just read from Cairo. A telegram sent by the Correspondent of *The Standard* from Suakin on the 22nd of February said that—

"Mr. Gladstone's statement in Parliament that the Government was still determined, after marching to Khartoum, to evacuate the Soudan, has created something like consternation both among the English and Natives here. There is a unanimity of feeling of absolute amazement that the English Government can be ignorant of the effect which such premature pledges must have in stultifying all the strenuous efforts of our agents, who have for months been striving, by dint of cautious and laborious diplomacy, to strengthen the allegiance of the friendly tribes, and to prevent the waverers from openly joining the enemy. . . . The determination expressed to crush the Mahdi is altogether overshadowed in the Native mind by that to abandon the Soudan. The news known here to-day will be carried to-morrow across the Desert. In 10 days it will be known at Berber and Khartoum, and throughout the whole of the Valley of the Upper Nile, and will be a direct incitement on the part of the English Government to every tribe in the Soudan to rise on the flanks and rear of our little Army there, for it is a notice that all who take our part or show us friendship will be finally abandoned to the vengeance of the Mahdi. The most intense bitterness is felt and expressed by officers and men here. They feel that the Government has thus once more, at a critical moment, increased the difficulties and dangers of their arduous undertaking, and has added one more to the series of blunders which will have to be retrieved by their life-blood. The declaration last year that the Soudan was to be abandoned doomed General Gordon's mission to failure, and cost him his life. The consequences of the reiteration of that pledge to-day are likely to prove scarcely less disastrous."

Already it was reported that Osman Digna was receiving large reinforcements, partly from Khartoum and partly from the wavering tribes. Whatever the real meaning of the declaration was, its effect upon the position of our Forces on the Nile under Lord Wolseley, and at Suakin under General Graham, was undoubted. Osman Digna had now advanced to such a pitch of boldness that he had summoned our officer at Suakin to surrender, and had announced that the garrison of Kassala was on the point of falling. With Kassala would go 4,000 brave troops, who had defended themselves for 12 months, and 25,000 helpless people, to whom General Gordon, in the name of Her Majesty, had repeatedly promised assistance and rescue. Under the pretence of relieving, Her Majesty's Government had made a ridi-

culous and abortive Treaty with the King of Abyssinia, for the carrying out of which not a single step had been taken. If this Expedition of 12,000 British and Indian troops, now being sent at an unseasonable period to Suakin, was not to effect the relief of Kassala, he would like to know for what purpose this enormous sacrifice of blood and treasure was being undertaken? If the garrison and the whole population of 25,000 persons shared the fate of Sinkat, Berber, and Khartoum, he, for one, would not be responsible. ["Oh!"] He considered that every Member of the House had some responsibility in the matter. It was to acquit himself of what he admitted to be a very small and insignificant portion of the common responsibility, but which was a responsibility that he felt and appreciated, that he had risen to call the attention of Her Majesty's Ministers, of Parliament, and of the country to this cruel betrayal of a large garrison and population, for the safety of whom Her Majesty's Ministers had made themselves directly answerable. The same Correspondent from whom he had already quoted stated—

"Kassala is the second city of the Soudan. It contains a population of at least 20,000 souls, and is the keystone of the line of Frontier strongholds, Senheit, Amadib, Gharra, and Gullabat, all of which are still resisting the Mahdi's power. The city has now been completely isolated for 12 months, and its garrison of 3,000 Regular Egyptian troops and 2,000 irregulars has maintained an heroic resistance, second only to that which Khartoum, animated by the presence and spirit of General Gordon, opposed to the enemy. The supplies of provisions and ammunition have for a long time been known to be running short."

And he went on to point out how it might be relieved—

"By one of two alternatives. If, as is now talked of, a portion of our Expedition lands at Trinkitat, and occupies Tokar, a flying column must be sent South to scour the country, disperse and put down the Hadendowas, and re-open communications between the Frontier strongholds and the sea. Unless one or other of these alternatives is adopted, the splendid defence which Kassala has made will be thrown away, the garrison sacrificed, and Gordon's pledged word, that the garrison should be relieved, dishonoured."

The writer went on to point out how Colonel Chermside's efforts for the relief of the city had been rendered nugatory. He said—

"The unexpected appearance of the Italians upon the scene has, however, paralysed his efforts, as in the face of a foreign occupation of Massowah he can no longer speak with the authority of the representative of the paramount Power. His measures for the relief of the garrison are, therefore, entirely at a standstill."

Kassala was on an extended line of Frontier, along which the Native Tribes were still resisting the Mahdi's power, and for such resistance would be subjected by him, if defeated, to barbarous treatment. He should probably be told by the Government that the difficulties in the way of relief were enormous and insuperable; but he would ask hon. Members seriously to consider how long it had been impossible for well-equipped and well-led British troops to march 260 miles to the relief of the threatened city? It was only 250 miles from Suakin to Berber. From Trinkitat to Kassala was only 60 or 70 miles further than the advance which Sir Herbert Stewart made from Korti to Metammeh without any of the serious difficulties which General Stewart had to encounter, except the presence of the Arabs. It might be undertaken by a General of fair ability without the assistance of a single British soldier. With 3,000 camels a force could be concentrated at Trinkitat or Massowah which would be able to relieve Kassala within a month. He believed there were many Members of the House who would be willing to undertake the Expedition. He did not think that any high military authority, if asked his opinion, would say that it would be a difficult or an impracticable operation. The road which would have to be followed was far better supplied with water than the route between Suakin and Berber, and from Massowah it passed through a fairly fertile country. He thanked the Committee for its kindness in having allowed him to make this protest. Of course, if Her Majesty's Ministers, on the responsibility of their position, said that this large grant of money was necessary in the pursuance of the policy which they considered to be for the interest of the country, he, for one, would not feel himself justified in opposing by his vote the demand which was made upon the Committee that night. At the same time, he must offer the strongest and most emphatic protest against the abandonment of the City of Kassala; and he trusted that the great Expedition which was now massing at Suakin would not, by the want

of any foresight or courage on the part of Her Majesty's Ministers, be made so absolutely fruitless, wanton, and wicked, as the Expedition of General Graham to Suakin was made last year by the same instrumentality. He did not wish to be misunderstood in regard to what he said upon that point. He threw no blame upon General Graham, or upon the gallant soldiers who fought under him. They did their duty gallantly and well; but what he did say was, that after Ministers had fought the two bloody battles of El Teb and Tamai, which caused the massacre of 6,000 Arabs and 200 British soldiers, then to withdraw their Forces at the very moment that the fruits of victory might have been secured, by opening the road from Suakin to Berber for the relief of Khartoum, was a cruel and wanton waste of life, and it was entirely owing to the weakness and the cowardice of Her Majesty's Government. It was not fear of the Arabs, or of danger to our troops, which caused the recall of General Graham's Army last March, but it was the fear which Her Majesty's Government entertained of the action of hon. Members below the Gangway. It was a little splutter of Radical agitation, which broke out at the time, that caused Her Majesty's Government to waver, hesitate, and ultimately to retreat. It was that which had deprived the country of all the fruits of that campaign, besides leading to a wicked and wanton sacrifice of life. He hoped a similar course would not be pursued again with regard to the operations of General Graham's new Force. He trusted that there would not be a repetition of the policy of the Government after El Teb; that there would be no more useless smashing of Osman Digna, and then the abandonment of all the fruits of the victory. Such a feeble and pointless course would involve the sacrifice of the garrison of Kassala, and the throwing over of the Soudan to cruel anarchy and fanatical barbarism. Unless Her Majesty's Ministers would undertake to adopt for the future a more manly and more statesmanlike policy than they had pursued in the past, there would be ample justification for opposing the Vote.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE desired, as a point of Order, to ask in what way the Vote would be put to the Committee. He understood that it was one Vote, that being divided into sections, and that each section would be put in order.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Vote before the Committee is the Vote for men, and not for money.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he gathered from what the Chairman had just stated that the 3,000 men to be voted were to be added to the Army. If they were told that this increase of the Army was necessary under ordinary circumstances for the defence of the country, or for the manning of their garrisons abroad, he thought there would be a fair case for considering the demand; but the Vote was deliberately asked for on account of the military operations that were now taking place in the Soudan. It was because they had had a considerable number of their soldiers occupied in maintaining order in Egypt that they had engaged in this Expedition to the Soudan. The noble Marquess anticipated that 12,000 men would be sent out—if, indeed, they had not already been sent out—to the Soudan, in order to effect some sort of operation against the Arabs in the neighbourhood of Suakin. He gathered from the noble Marquess that the object of this Expedition was to prevent the troops of Osman Digna from being in a position to attack Lord Wolseley. Then it was quite obvious that if Lord Wolseley would only retreat from the position he occupied to Wady Halfa these additional men would not be required. These 12,000 men were sent out to do what was done some time ago—namely, to massacre the Arabs assembled in the neighbourhood of Suakin. He could quite understand the course pursued by Her Majesty's Government if they had adopted the policy of the Opposition, and really intended to advance to Khartoum, and to undertake what had been called the civilization of the country—that was to say, to seize upon the country and open it out to British trade, so that English goods might be sold, and the blessings of civilization spread abroad. That, however, was not the object of the Government. He doubted whether they really intended to go to Khartoum. At first it was said that the intention was to occupy Khartoum and to overthrow the Mahdi; but that had been reduced now by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War to a possible con-

tingency of some kind. The noble Marquess said that certainly it was possible they might ultimately advance to Khartoum; but he by no means declared positively that they should ever go there. Certainly, if he (Mr. Labouchere) thought so he would oppose the Vote. But having, practically, no intention, even if they did advance to Khartoum, of holding the country, he could not understand on what possible grounds the House of Commons ought to be asked to vote this money and these men. The Government seemed to have no policy whatever, except that of tiding over the momentary difficulty; and, under these circumstances, he would certainly divide the Committee against the Vote.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he should like to make a few remarks upon what had been stated by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War. He was glad to hear the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), because he thought no one could, and no one would, deny that it was by the reckless statements of the Prime Minister and the Government, with regard to the abandonment of the Soudan, that all the massacres to which the hon. Member had referred had taken place. Upon the Prime Minister's head especially would rest the indelible disgrace of having made a statement which absolutely caused those massacres, without taking any steps at the time to relieve the garrisons. He was glad that the question had again been raised. After the massacre of Hicks Pasha's Army not a step was taken, except to send from Cairo Baker Pasha and his Army, although the men composing that Force, mostly police, were known to be almost utterly untrustworthy. It suffered the same fate as the Army of Hicks Pasha. Then, again, the Government were too late, although knowing well what the consequences would be, in sending relief to General Gordon. Instead of sending forward the Army of General Graham after the two great battles of El Teb and Tamai, they withdrew it; and what had been the consequence? A series of small, but most irritating attacks, increasing in boldness, month by month, on Suakin. Osman Digna and his Force had now become so intolerable that the same work had now to be done over again solely in consequence of the irresolution and incapacity of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to grapple with the actual facts of the position as they existed at the time. The Prime Minister would never, in future history, get out of the grave responsibility he had incurred by his want of forethought and foresight in going from one position to another without considering what would be the consequence of each step he took. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War began by stating that this Expedition had only cost, up to the present time, £1,300,000. If that was the case, all he could say was that the work had been done far more economically than anyone would have given the noble Marquess the credit for. He fancied, however, that when the account came in, the House would find that the country would have to pay a far larger sum than that calculated by the noble Marquess. Last year, in the Autumn Session, when the £1,000,000 in addition to the £300,000 previously voted was asked for, the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that that sum would be amply sufficient. He had asked, and hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House had asked, the right hon. Gentleman whether he was sure that that sum would be sufficient to carry him to the end of the year? In reply the right hon. Gentleman said that the Expedition was a very cheap one, and that it would cost very little more. Nevertheless, they had now to consider an addition of nearly £1,000,000 to the £1,300,000 already granted; and he fancied that when the total account came in hereafter there would be a still larger sum to be provided for.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON wished to be allowed to explain. There would be no addition, as far as the Government were aware, to the cost of the Nile Expedition beyond the sum already voted

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that the sum contained in the Supplementary Estimates was for operations in the Soudan.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes; for new operations.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT: "For new operations." That showed clearly that when the Government com-

menced their operations they had not the slightest notion of what was going to happen. They thought it was going to be a mere walk-over, and that they would be able to do the same as was done at Tel-el-Kebir, and that the whole of the Army would be brought back again at very little cost, and with only a small sacrifice of life. Then the noble Marquess stated that he acquitted the Army of all blame for the failure of the Expedition. The noble Marquess had paid a just tribute to the honour and credit of that most gallant Army; and whatever they might think about other circumstances, there was one thing of which they were all, as Englishmen, proud; and that wast he manner in which the Army, from the General down to the drummer boy, had discharged the onerous and difficult duties they had been called on to perform. But although the noble Marquess might acquit the Army of any blame for the failure of the Expedition, they could not acquit the Government. The Prime Minister told them the other day that he and his Colleagues were nearly three months in making up their minds whether the Expedition should go by the Nile, or from Suakin to Berber. Those three fatal months of delay had ruined the whole of the enterprize, and had made it an absolute failure.

MR. GLADSTONE said, he was sure the hon. and gallant Member did not wish him to re-state the case; but the three months to which he had referred were anterior to the decision to send the Expedition at all.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, it was true they were anterior to the absolute decision; but the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman, as he understood it, was this—that it was decided after the Vote of Censure was placed on the Paper, and after the right hon Gentleman had only a small majority in his favour. It was then that the right hon. Gentleman stated that the Government had had the case before them, and that the conflicting evidence was so great that they could not make up their minds, although this happened in May, until the 8th of August. He believed the 8th of August was the day; and, consequently, for three months the Government were hesitating and doubting, although the right hon. Gentleman had solemnly pledged his word, as Prime Minister of this country, that he was responsible for the safety of General Gordon. That was a position which he did not envy the right hon. Gentleman. The Expedition was sent; and the Committee knew how it toiled up the Nile. They also knew that it was too late, and the greatest hero of this country had been killed. They further knew that this result was produced by the hesitation of the Government, who had fatally delayed sending out the Expedition, which otherwise would have been in time to relieve Khartoum. They were told, as a sort of excuse, that treachery might have taken place at any time; but all who were acquainted with the history of the Expedition knew that treachery could not have taken place at that particular time. As a matter of fact, the treachery could not have occurred until Omdurman was taken by the Mahdi, and until the tribes had closed in upon Khartoum to such an extent that there was little or no hope of the escape of General Gordon and his followers unless they received relief from this country. He did not wish to go over the sad and melancholy circumstances which had already been discussed by the House. He would only add one word — that although Lord Wolseley and his gallant Army had done their best, the Government had failed, and failed signally, to do their part. And now it was found that they were to have a new Expedition, consisting of 12,000 men, sent to Suakin. He was glad that that Expedition had been sent there; but he thought they ought to hear a good deal more as to what was to be the outcome of it. They ought to know, and he thought the Government were bound to tell them, whether they meant to do more than smash the Mahdi and Osman Digna—whether it was mere revenge, or whether they meant to hold the country, as they ought to do, in the interests of the peace of Egypt? In voting this extra number of men they ought to have a clear and definite idea of what the Government meant to do. They know perfectly well what they had done in the past. They could only judge of them by what they had done in the past. The House could have no confidence that they would do in the future that which was for the best interests of this country, unless they distinctly pledged themselves, and told the House in plain

Sir Walter B. Barttelot

language from the Treasury Benches what it was they intended to perform. They had said that if Afghanistan was invaded it would be a cause of war with Russia. That was a distinct statement made from the Treasury Bench; and it satisfied the nation. But what the House wanted to know in regard to this question was more than that. They wanted to know whether the Government meant to carry out the policy with which they originally went to Egypt—namely, that a good Government should be established in Egypt, and that that Government should be under the control of this country? If they were not to have that good Government established under the control of England, then he should like to know why all this blood and treasure was to be wasted? They had a right to ask this; and they had a right before the debate closed to know what the principles were on which the Government were now proposing to act. Did they mean to remain in Egypt? Did they mean to hold certain portions of the Soudan—such, for instance, as that in which the railway was about to be made? Was it to be a permanent railway, or was it to be handed over to the Mahdi, or any other adventurer who went there after we returned? Those were questions which he thought deserved, and ought to receive, a serious answer from Her Majesty's Government. Would the Government assure them, as they had done with regard to Afghanistan, that they had a policy, and that they meant to carry it out? If they would give the House that assurance, there was no money for which they might ask which the Opposition would not be ready to grant them.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, he regretted the attack which the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had made, very unjustly, in his opinion, upon the Prime Minister. He did not propose, however, to follow the hon. and gallant Gentleman in the remarks he had made. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War, who moved the Resolution before the Committee, had told them that it did not absolutely commit the House to any policy whatever; but he thought hon. Members must all feel that every Vote and every Resolution passed made it harder to draw back afterwards. It seemed to him that the Resolution of that evening was committing the country to an enterprize arduous and, as he thought, unjustifiable. Although they had had a debate on the question a short time ago, no one, he thought, could complain that it should be raised again when they were asked for a grant, because no one could doubt that the new policy on which it would appear they were about to embark would involve momentous consequences, while it would be an entire departure from the principles which Her Majesty's Ministers had hitherto advocated, and which the nation adopted at the last General Election by so large a majority. He said that this was a departure from the previous policy of Her Majesty's Government; and in proof of that he might refer to the declaration of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War. Speaking in February last year, he said—

"I am prepared to maintain that the policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the Soudan is a right policy. I hold that our policy of non-interference in the affairs of the Soudan is a right policy."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 1433

And why did he consider that this was the right policy for us to adopt? "Because," he continued—

"We have no British interests in the Soudan, there are no European interests in the Soudan, at least no adequate British or European interests, which would justify the employment of British Forces or the expenditure of British resources."—(*Ibid.* 1434.)

The Prime Minister himself said, in the same debate—

"The Soudan is a vast country, equal in size to France, Germany, and Spain—a desert country with a deadly climate, inhabited thinly by sparse and warlike tribes . . . . They love it as their country . . . . We have refused—and I believe the House will approve our refusing—to have anything to do with the re-conquest of the Soudan."—(*Ibid.* 715.)

He continued—

"It was estimated that 100,000 Egyptians had laid down their lives in endeavouring to maintain that barren conquest."

If the barren—the worse than barren—conquest of the Soudan cost the lives of 100,000 Egyptians, of men themselves natives of a hot country, accustomed to the dry and torrid climate of Africa, what number of Englishmen might they not sacrifice—men accustomed to the cool, moist, and comparatively equable climate of these Islands? If, indeed,

they were going to hold Khartoum and the country round, the case might be different. They would, at least, give the people peace and security. But the Prime Minister himself had declared against this. He had expressed his conviction that—

"It was impossible to hold the Soudan in any manner tolerably satisfactory, and that consequently it was our duty to speak frankly and boldly upon the matter, because the Soudan had assumed a question, not of £100,000 a-year, as was the old story; but it had assumed a character such as to make it evident that if the struggle were to be continued, it would suck the life blood from the heart of Egypt."—(*Ibid.* 718.)

Yes; and it had assumed such a character now, that if they engaged in this terrible and ruinous enterprize it would "suck the life blood from the heart" of England. What did General Gordon himself think on this subject? Just before he started for Khartoum he placed his opinions solemnly on record. Speaking of good government in the Soudan, he said—

"It is evident that this we cannot secure without an inordinate expenditure of men and money. . . . . The Soudan is a useless possession. It ever was so and ever will be so. . . . . It is larger than Germany, France, and Spain together. It cannot be governed except by a dictator, who may be good or bad; and if bad he will cause constant revolt. No one who has ever lived in the Soudan can escape the reflection what a useless possession is this land. Few men, also, can stand its fearful monotony and its deadly climate. Therefore, I think the Government are fully justified in recommending its evacuation. The sacrifices necessary towards securing good government are far too numerous to admit of such an attempt being made. Indeed, one may say it is impracticable at any cost."

On this attempt, which General Gordon said could not be made "without an inordinate expenditure of men and money," which might, indeed, be said to be "impracticable at any cost," they were now about to embark. Perhaps, however, he should be told that since those opinions were expressed circumstances had altered. Yes; they had altered indeed. At that time Gordon himself was alive; at that time the tribes of the Soudan were disorganized; they had no single leader; they were but ill supplied with arms; the fortifications and arsenals of Khartoum were at our disposal. That was all changed now. General Gordon was, alas! no more; the tribes were united; they had an able leader; they occupied the fortifications of Khartoum, and had secured the immense stores of arms and ammunition which it contained. Was this enterprize, then, any easier now? was it likely to be any less bloody—any less costly? He did not doubt that they could take and hold Khartoum; but that was not their policy, nor would that overthrow the Mahdi. He would probably retire South. Were they going to follow him further still into the heart of Africa? Could the right hon. Gentleman give any idea of what this new policy was to cost them? He was informed that every English soldier involved an expenditure of £70 per month, or at the rate of over £800 a-year for every soldier sent there. They read every day of hundreds of camels here and hundreds of camels there. [An hon. MEMBER: Thousands.] Well, thousands; and everyone who had been in the East could imagine what a frightful expenditure that must involve. Let the Committee consider for a moment how much good could be effected if these vast sums were spent usefully at home, instead of being squandered abroad. Let him also beg hon. Members to consider what were the circumstances under which they were going to engage the nation in this terrible enterprize. Their National Expenditure already amounted to nearly £100,000,000. They were told that they must spend several millions on their Navy if they were to maintain their supremacy at sea. Their Army had already as much to do as it could undertake. South Africa was still a constant drain on their resources; France was jealous and irritated; Germany angry; and though they might feel that that arose from misunderstanding, and might justly hope that mutual explanations might restore the cordial feelings which ought to exist between two nations who had so much in common, still no one could have read the Blue Books and not see how serious the present state of things was. As to their relations with Russia, it would be just now impolitic to speak. Surely, then, this was not a moment when they should send their troops away to the far South, and squander their resources in fruitless war. But then, it was sometimes said that their troops were in such a position that it was easier to advance than to retreat. Of that, however, they had no evidence whatever. Lord Wolseley, so far as

they know, had never expressed any such opinion. He placed, as the right hon. Gentleman had told them, two military plans before the Government—one to be adopted if they determined to go to Khartoum and overthrow the Mahdi, the other if they did not. They adopted the former; and that conclusively proved that, if they did go to Khartoum, it was not for military considerations, but in order to overthrow the Mahdi. Nor could it be maintained that they must attack the Mahdi to prevent the Mahdi from attacking them. What did the Prime Minister himself say when that very argument was used last May by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach)? He said that the right hon. Baronet used the argument that unless the Army of the Mahdi was—

"Put down in the Soudan, it will advance on Egypt . . . To keep it out of Egypt it is necessary to put it down in the Soudan; and that is the task the right hon. Baronet desires to saddle upon England. Now, I tell hon. Gentlemen this, that that task means the reconquest of the Soudan. I put aside for the moment all questions of climate, of distance, of difficulties, of the enormous sacrifices, and all the frightful loss of life. There is something worse than that involved in the plan of the right hon. Gentleman. It would be a war of conquest against a people struggling to be free, and rightly struggling to be free." (*Hansard*, [288] 54.)

In a later portion of the same speech the right hon. Gentleman said—

"The right hon. Gentleman declared that the movement of the Mahdi must be put down by England sooner or later, and, as I understood him, and I do not think he will deny it, he has said that the sooner it was put down the easier it would be to do so. In other words, the right hon. Gentleman advises us to carry the line of conquest by British and Christian arms among the Mahommedan people struggling for their liberties in the Soudan." (*Ibid.* 70.)

Well, but the policy which the right hon. Baronet opposite advised last May, and which the Government then eloquently denounced, was just what they were now themselves undertaking. It had been argued by one high Indian authority that they ought at any cost to overthrow the Mahdi in order to maintain their *prestige* in India. But against that view they might quote another high Indian authority—Sir William Gregory—who had taken exactly the opposite line, and considered that in this struggle to crush a Mahommedan Power they would run a great risk of alienating their Mahommedan fellow-countrymen in India. But even suppose the first view correct, would their *prestige* suffer less if they evacuated Khartoum next year or the year after? Moreover, could anyone calmly and on reflection justify such a policy? He would say nothing of their own sacrifices; but to carry fire and bloodshed through the Soudan, to burn the villages, to ravage the crops, to fill up the wells, to destroy the humble homes, to reduce women and children to beggary and starvation, to slaughter thousands of miserable Natives in the heart of Africa, in order to produce a sensation in India, was a policy too heartless, too cynical—he might say too wicked—to contemplate. That this should be done in the name of England was almost incredible; and he felt satisfied it was a policy which before long the heart and conscience of England would indignantly repudiate. Why had these unfortunate people risen in arms? Had they had no cause? Had they had nothing to complain of? He admitted that until now our conscience was clear. Our earnest wishes had been for their welfare; our desire had been to assist them in securing a good Government. But as things were now, the best way to do that was to let them alone. Why should we overthrow the Ruler they had chosen, and put up someone else in his place? He should have thought we had by now felt the folly—he might say the impossibility—of imposing puppet Rulers on unwilling subjects. They had, indeed, been at war with the Mahdi; but surely they could afford to be generous. The Soudanese rose to fight for their liberties. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War last year expressed the opinion, which he said was that "of almost everyone who had written on the Soudan," that—

"The revolt of the Mahdi and the tribes who have adhered to him was justified by the oppression which they had suffered from Egyptian officials . . . and by the oppression of Egyptian troops. I do not say that the misgovernment of the Soudan by the Egyptian Government was wilfully intended." (*Hansard*, [284] 1658-9.)

The Prime Minister expressed himself in almost identical terms. He said that to send a British Army into the Soudan

"Would be a war of conquest against a people struggling to be free. Yes," he said, "there are

people struggling to be free, and they are struggling rightly to be free."—(3 *Hansard*, [288] 55.)

Yet the Government were calling on them now to enter on this terrible and ruinous undertaking, to squander millions of English money, and sacrifice thousands of English lives, and all for what? To overthrow a people who he himself said were struggling rightly to be free. To have sent General Gordon to Khartoum might have been a mistake; but, if so, it was a generous error; it was a policy which had entailed on them heavy sacrifices, but of which, as a nation, they had at least no cause to be ashamed. But what should be their policy now? To put down these tribes struggling, as the right hon. Gentleman said—and struggling rightly—for their freedom, was a policy unworthy of England, which he believed the people of England would not support. The object of Lord Wolseley's Expedition was to rescue their heroic countryman. Under these circumstances it had the almost unanimous approval of the country. But what was our policy now? According to the instructions communicated to Lord Wolseley—

"The primary object of the Expedition up the Valley of the Nile is to bring away General Gordon and Colonel Stewart from Khartoum. When that object has been secured no further offensive operations of any kind are to be undertaken."

Now, why should we not adhere to the policy thus laid down? If we now undertook offensive operations, would it not be said, and said naturally, that the safety of General Gordon and Colonel Stewart could not really have been our primary object. Let the Government determine what were to be the future frontiers of Egypt, and then announce to the Native Tribes that while they would not interfere with them beyond those limits, leaving them free to govern themselves according to their own ideas, any attack by them would be resisted by the whole power of England. That would be a policy which could be justified, and which the country would support; but it was contrary to all the principles of the Liberal Party, and contrary to all principles of equity and justice, that the Government should use the might of England to conquer and overthrow a brave people to whose allegiance they had no claim, and who were struggling for freedom and independence.

Mr. CHAPLIN: Sir, the hon. Baronet has drawn a picture of the results of the policy of Her Majesty's Government as heartrending and horrible as it is possible to conceive. "That policy," said the hon. Baronet, "is a policy unworthy of England, which will not continue to be supported, and which I am certain before long the people of England will denounce." Then, why did the hon. Baronet support it himself? [Sir John Lubbock: No.] The hon. Baronet says he does not support it; but it is within my own recollection and I believe I am not wrong in saying that when the question as to the policy of Her Majesty's Government was a few nights ago submitted to the House of Commons, the hon. Baronet voted with the supporters of the Government. The Government, however, need not be alarmed at the threats or menaces of the hon. Baronet, for, blatant as he may be against the Government in debate in the House of Commons, they have no more obsequious follower when it comes to the vote. The hon. Baronet commenced his observations by complaining of the attack made by the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) upon the policy of the Prime Minister; but I am bound to say that I consider that the complaint was exceedingly out of place. I understood my hon. and gallant Friend to be endorsing the observations of my hon. Friend the Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett). Whatever may be the opinions of hon. Members on that side of the House as to the general political views of the hon. Member for Eye, I think that both sides of the House that afternoon must have sympathized with my hon. Friend's feeling and generous utterances on behalf of the garrison of Kassala, and I am therefore somewhat surprised at the reception which those observations met with on that side of the House. I recollect that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister last Session rebuked me because I put to the Government some Questions with regard to the garrison of Sinkat; the right hon. Gentleman then told us that it was the duty of Her Majesty's Government to have regard to the safety of all the garrisons in the Soudan. How has the right hon. Gentleman discharged that duty? We appealed in vain to the right hon. Gen-

tleman with regard to Sinkat and Tokar, with the result that is but too well known; and although I sympathize with the generous aspirations of the hon. Member for Eye, I am afraid that, owing to the delay of the Government, it will be with the garrison of Kassala the same as with the garrisons of Sinkat and Tokar, and that the Government will be too late again. In the few observations I desire to submit to the Committee, I would gladly join in the tribute which the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War has paid to our Forces in the Soudan. Seldom or never, I imagine, have English Forces been placed in positions of greater danger, difficulty, and hardship than they have been called upon to occupy, and nothing can exceed the gallantry and heroism with which they have performed their duty on every occasion. But the noble Marquess made use of one observation which I cannot allow to pass without comment. The noble Marquess said that he entirely acquitted the General and soldiers of blame for having failed in their object.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I said that not only did we entirely acquit them of any blame for the failure of the chief object of the Expedition, but that the country was under the greatest possible obligations to them for what they had done.

MR. CHAPLIN: Quite so. The noble Marquess says that he acquits them of all blame for the failure that has taken place. But why on earth should the question of blame to the Forces have arisen in the mind of any human being? I think, Sir, it must be the uneasy conscience of the noble Marquess which caused the idea to enter his mind. There is much blame in this matter; but whatever blame there is attaches not to Lord Wolseley, or to our Forces in the Soudan, but to the Government for their delay in taking action, which I believe has been the sole cause of the failure to which the noble Marquess alludes. Passing to the general observations of the noble Marquess, if I may be allowed to make a criticism on the subject, I should say that his speech is a speech of "probabilities." The noble Marquess said that the Estimates now before us were for this object—they were to be for the continuation and the probable extension of the operations under Lord Wolseley. And what is the object of these operations? They are to be for the advance on and recapture of Khartoum, which might ultimately be "probably" necessary. Now, I venture to think that this language points to a very great and remarkable change in the attitude of the Government, and, in my opinion, it imposes on us the duty of being more than ever careful in examining the Estimate now submitted, and the policy of the Government so far as it is now shadowed forth. Now, the noble Marquess has told us the proposals of the Government in regard to railways in the Soudan. It appears that we are to have two railways instead of one. We are to have a railway from Suakin on the one hand, and we are to have a railway along the Nile on the other. I have from the first always had very grave doubts, resting on the best information I could obtain, as to the wisdom or expediency of making a railway from Suakin to Berber. The Committee will remember that the Government were totally unable to put before Parliament any Estimate whatever of the probable cost of such a line, or of the probable time within which it could be completed; and there can be no doubt as to the enormous difficulties which would attend on the construction of this railway. There is the difficulty of obtaining water. The noble Marquess said nothing about that. We read all kinds of reports and rumours in the newspapers on this subject. We have heard a great deal about the pumps by which water is to be supplied during the construction and maintenance of the railway, and that is a subject on which I should like to hear a little more from the noble Marquess to-night. There is the enormous difficulty of providing adequate supplies, not only for the Army which has to go in advance, but for the immense staff of working people who would be engaged in the construction of the railway; and above all this there is the fact that the line is to be made in the face of hostile forces whose numbers, although not exactly ascertainable, are known to be very large, and that the whole of it has to be made through a barren desert, and it has to cross an elevation of over 3,000 feet. Moreover, I judged from what the noble Marquess said this evening that, in the view of Her Majesty's Government, it was ex-

tremely problematical whether the railway from Suakin to Berber would be completed or not. Of course, under these circumstances, it is the duty of Members of Parliament to consider how far they will give their sanction to such an undertaking. I am bound to say, however, that the responsibility is entirely removed from our shoulders upon this occasion, because the noble Marquess stated that Lord Wolseley, after the fall of Khartoum, said it was absolutely necessary for the safety of his own Force that an Expedition should be sent from Suakin to scatter the forces of Osman Digna, who was advancing on his left, and therefore for that purpose it was necessary to make the railway. Lord Wolseley says it is necessary for the safety of the Army that there should be an advance from Suakin, and then the noble Marquess tells us, on his own responsibility as Secretary of State for War, that in his opinion there should be a railway. Under these circumstances, it is impossible for us to do anything but give our sanction to its construction. Then I come to the question of the other railway, and I think the Committee will concur in the opinion expressed by Lord Wolseley that this is the more important operation of the two. The noble Marquess, I think, the other day overrated the difficulties of the construction of that railway. I have endeavoured to obtain information since then, and I cannot but think that the noble Marquess was misinformed in what he said on that point. The noble Marquess stated that the route had been surveyed for the purpose of making the railway, which involved heavy rock-cuttings, possibly some tunnels, and a bridge or bridges across the Nile. Now, Sir, I understand that there is only one person by whom the route has been surveyed, and that is Mr. John Fowler, the eminent engineer, whose name is familiar to the House. I should like to quote two passages from the Report of the survey made by Mr. John Fowler with regard to the railroad. He says in his Report, dated 1873—

"The whole railway may be described as one of easy construction. There are no tunnels or important bridges on the line, except the bridge across the Nile at Kobé."

The noble Marquess said there were some tunnels. The Report goes on to say—

"By adopting gradients and curves which are suited to the peculiarities of the country and to the traffic, I have succeeded in laying out the railway so as to avoid tunnels altogether, and so that the quantity of rock-cutting is extremely small. Indeed, except the bridge across the River Nile, there is not a single considerable work on the whole line, and I see no reason why every part of the railway, except the permanent way, rolling stock, and the Nile bridge, should not be performed by Egyptians under a proper organization."

Sir, I think these extracts from Mr. John Fowler's Report justify my statement that the noble Marquess has somewhat overrated the difficulty of constructing a railway along the Nile, and, if that be so, I am inclined to cast some doubt on his further statement, that the facilities for its construction are probably less than those for the construction of a line from Suakin to Berber. I shall be glad to hear further from the noble Marquess on this point, because, if what I have read to the Committee be true, so far from the facilities for constructing the line being less than on the Suakin-Berber route, they are probably very considerably greater, and I think it will be an additional reason to justify the House of Commons in urging upon Her Majesty's Government the desirability of completing this railway along the Nile with all the despatch in their power. But if Parliament is to sanction this great expenditure, and if we are to urge the Government and encourage them to lay out railroads for the purpose of giving assistance to Lord Wolseley, I do hope that in future whatever Parliament may sanction as a means of assistance to him will not be counteracted over and over again, as it has been in the past, by the speeches of the kind which are so continually falling from Ministers. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister contradicted the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), disputing the accuracy of his assertion, which was that with reference to the conduct of the tribes necessitating the retirement upon Dongola, it was the first result of—

"Mr. Gladstone's fatal declaration, which has increased 50 per cent the difficulties of our task and the dangers of our troops. Lord Wolseley's sensible speech to General Gordon's men was an unavailing effort to counteract the effect of that declaration."

The right hon. Gentleman asked the hon. Member to give him the quotation

to which he referred. My hon. Friend quoted from memory, and the right hon. Gentleman taxed him with extreme inaccuracy. My hon. Friend, however, has supplied me with the exact words, and I appeal to the Committee whether my hon. Friend was not substantially correct? He referred to the speech that, I think, the right hon. Gentleman made on the opening night of the Session. In that speech were these words—

"I need only remind the House that the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government with respect to the Soudan has always been the evacuation of the Soudan by Egypt and its restoration to freedom. That policy has received the approval of the Khedive and the present Egyptian Government, and it has undergone no change."

MR. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!

MR. CHAPLIN: "Hear, hear!" says the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, go on.

MR. CHAPLIN: That is the only quotation I have got. The right hon. Gentleman is welcome to it.

MR. GLADSTONE: It is perfectly right so far as it goes, but it is incomplete.

MR. CHAPLIN: But the right hon. Gentleman's charge against the hon. Member for Eye was not that his quotation was incomplete, but that it was inaccurate in the extreme.

MR. GLADSTONE: And so it was.

MR. CHAPLIN: I should like to know in what respect it was inaccurate. Does the right hon. Gentleman imagine for a moment that anyone in this House or in Egypt, or even the Mahdi himself, believed when he made the statement that he had a mental reservation in favour of England? Everyone supposed—and naturally supposed as a matter of course—that the right hon. Gentleman meant the evacuation of the Soudan without any reservation whatever. I must say that the observation that fell from the hon. Member for Eye was entirely justified by what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman in the first instance. It is impossible, in my opinion, to over estimate the mischief that was caused by declarations of that character. I need not go further for an illustration than to ask hon. Members to remember what has occurred in the House of Commons to-night. Immediately after the speech of the noble Marquess—the speech of probabilities—up got the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and said, as a supporter of the Government—and his words will go all over the world and will reach the Soudan—that the Government evidently never meant to go to Khartoum at all, and he said—"I am certain they are not going there now." Nothing has been said by the right hon. Gentleman to remove that impression. I am somewhat tempted to quote other extracts to show the mischief that has been done in this matter from the first. When the policy of evacuation was first announced by the right hon. Gentleman—somewhat more than a year ago, I think—Sir Samuel Baker wrote home quoting *The Standard* Correspondent, the gallant but unfortunate Mr. Cameron, who met his death at Abu Klea. He said—

"The announcement by the British Government that the Soudan is to abandoned has come like a thunder-clap on all here, and has nullified all the efforts of the past weeks."

The same gentleman says—

"The difficulties of the situation have been immensely aggravated by the announcement. On the receipt of the news, the Cadi (*i.e.*, Chief Judge) of Suakin secretly assembled the leading Arab inhabitants and informed them that the English were going to give up the Soudan to the Mahdi; and that he should, therefore, at once go over and make friends with Osman Digna, and he strongly advised them to do the same. The same night he passed through our lines to the enemy."

Another Correspondent says—

"The news that the Khedive is ordered to abandon the Soudan has destroyed all the diplomatic arrangements made by Baker Pasha with the quasi-friendly Arab tribes."

I should also like to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman, in case he has not seen it, to a paragraph which, I think, must touch his kindlier feelings, because it comes, or purports to come, from the friends and relations of the Forces in the field at the present time. The paragraph in question was communicated by the Correspondent of *The Times*. It says—

"With some pardonable excitement, the persons in Cairo who have relations and friends in the British Forces ask whether nothing can be done to prevent the safety of our troops from being imperilled by the acts of the English Cabinet. Differences, they urge, may exist as to the British policy or as to our humanitarian duties to the hitherto friendly tribes, but even Party exigencies may surely give place to care for the safety of our troops in the existing crisis. In our anxiety to enforce the policy of 'retire' we are likely to render the 'rescue' of our troops the next task."

I would recommend that paragraph to the serious reflection of hon. Gentlemen opposite, who, consistently I admit, because they have done so from the first, have advocated a policy of "retire," and nothing else. But, Sir, with regard to the Government, I do think we may make a different appeal to them. In the interest of Lord Wolseley and in the interest of the troops themselves, I appeal to them to abstain from uncertain speeches and uncertain words, which, under all the circumstances, I can only consider as of the utmost cruelty to our Forces at the present time. Sir, so long as the Government remains a Government it is the duty of the House of Commons—and I am sure it will be the course of the Opposition—to give them every support and every assistance that is requisite and necessary for the success of our Forces in the Soudan; but if all the expenditure of blood and treasure which Parliament is ready to sanction is to be counteracted by fatal speeches of this nature, then I say, upon my responsibility as an independent Member of the House of Commons, that it will be necessary for Parliament to consider whether it will not become their duty to refuse Supplies to a Government who have proved themselves utterly incapable of dealing with the crisis which they, and they alone, have themselves created.

Mr. W. FOWLER said, he only wished to say a very few words with reference to the proposal now before the Committee. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), who had just sat down, had taunted the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) with supporting the Government in the policy they had enunciated upon the Vote of Censure, and at the same time supporting the Amendment of the hon. Member for Newcastle. Well, he (Mr. Fowler) himself had also voted with the Government in the division on the Vote of Censure. Why had he done that? Because he had more confidence in Her Majesty's Government than in hon. Gentlemen opposite. The object of the Vote of Censure was to turn out the present Government and to bring in hon. Gentlemen opposite in their places, and he, of course, could not vote in condemnation of the policy of the Government, unless he had wished to place the Opposition in power. He had no desire to do that; but, at the same time, he did not approve of all that the Government were doing, and therefore he contended that the vote he had given had been perfectly consistent. There was another object before the Committee at the present moment, and the question was whether the object of this Vote was an object of which they could approve? What was the object of the Government? Why, plainly, it was to go on to destroy the power of the Mahdi, and to go on to Khartoum, but not to stay in it—to leave it to its inhabitants. That was a policy which he must confess he could not understand. He could understand a policy which said—"We will go to Khartoum and stay there;" and he believed that if the Government ever got to Khartoum they would stay there, because he did not believe the people of this country would ever endure their leaving Khartoum if they once got there. If they expended so much blood and treasure in getting to Khartoum they would have to stay there; and therefore it was that he so strenuously objected to the policy that the Committee were now asked to endorse. A policy which said—"We will bring back our troops, and do all that is necessary to secure their safe retirement—we will endure any sacrifice to insure their safety," he could understand; but they were asked to do a great deal more than that. They were not asked to bring the troops back, but to send them forward. Hon. Members opposite had used every exertion to induce the Government to send them forward, and hon. Members below the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House had, on the other hand, done all they could to discourage the Government from sending forward the troops now that it was not possible to rescue General Gordon. The logical position of the Government now would be to say—"We cannot do that which we intended, and we therefore will not embark upon operations of an indefinite kind, and the end of which we cannot see." Some hon. Members opposite not only wanted the Government to go forward, but to hold the Soudan; and to that he (Mr. Fowler) was also strongly opposed. He was perfectly confident that this country was commencing an undertaking the full extent of which they were unable yet to understand. The operations they were entering upon,

and the work they were setting themselves to do, was so stupendous that he absolutely dreaded to think over what it might involve in money and in blood. As he had said, if the object of the Government was to come away from the Soudan, he could understand it. In carrying out that object they would have to undertake some serious military operations; it might be that in order to get away they might have to take Berber, and to make the railway from that place to Suakin. If that were necessary, let it be done by all means; but he must protest against undertaking those operations all for nothing—for the object of going to Khartoum and then coming away, which seemed to him totally inconsistent with common sense. He was talking to a Member of the Government the other day, who had asked him—"What difficulty do you see in our going to Khartoum and coming away?" And he (Mr. Fowler) replied—"Why, Parliament will not endure such a waste of money, and the reckless murder that it would involve. It would be absurd to go to Khartoum, unless you have some object in the Expedition which you have not told us." If he were told that the Government wished to go to Khartoum in the interest of their Indian Possessions, and for the sake of their Mahommedan subjects, then he replied that the object was much too vague to justify such an expenditure. If it were said—"But we must show our power," he would reply—"But we have shown our power." Never in the whole history of the English Army had operations been undertaken and carried out in a manner more creditable to the English Force. They had shown their power, and had indicated to the whole world that they were still a great and gallant people, with immense fighting powers. It was not necessary to show that any further. Let them rather show the strength of men not afraid to be thought afraid. Strong in the power they possessed, let them also be strong enough to say—"We are not afraid to let you see that we know not only when to go on, but also when to retire." It was, in his opinion, a very important moment when the Government first heard of the death of General Gordon. The gallant General could no longer be rescued, and the Government then had the great opportunity of saying, logically and consistently—"We cannot do what we wanted to do; therefore we will do what all along it has been our policy to do—namely, leave the Soudanese to govern themselves." But the Government had lost that opportunity, and had committed themselves to a policy the end of which it was impossible to foresee. As to the fine distinction drawn by the Prime Minister with regard to Egypt in the Soudan and England in the Soudan, it was much too subtle for his poor mind. He could not understand it. They had all understood on the first night of the Session that England was going away from the Soudan. ["No, no!"] Well, at any rate, he and others had so understood it; he had understood that both Egypt and England were to retire from the Soudan. But they were told afterwards that the right hon. Gentleman had only referred to Egypt.

MR. GLADSTONE: I merely cited the words.

MR. W. FOWLER said, the effect on his mind, when he heard the words of the Prime Minister, was that it was intended to go to Khartoum and then to come away, and that both Egypt and England would then leave the Soudan to be governed by the Soudanese. Then they had the statement that only Egypt was to leave, and if that were so they were to remain. England was there at the present time; but if the Soudanese were to govern themselves, then it followed as a matter of logic that England would have to go away, so that his contention that when they got to Khartoum they were to come away again was perfectly sound, and he must strenuously protest against a sacrifice of men and money for the purpose. He could not believe that it was either necessary or right, and he emphatically denied that it could be in the interest of India. The arguments as to India had great weight with many; but he could not consent to sacrifice so many lives because, forsooth, some people in the East might think that England had of late lost her power. He did not, however, think that people in the East had any contemptuous opinion of them. It seemed to him that their Indian allies were actuated by the most friendly spirit towards them, for he could not forget the generous offer made quite recently by the Nizam of Hyderabad.

That offer did not look as though Indian Potentates considered our power to be on the wane. The more they reflected upon this matter, the more serious did the situation appear. They seemed to be going into an undertaking for no good object. If he could see what would be the ultimate extent of these operations, he should be more inclined to vote with the Government. The more he thought of the history of this terrible country, which had been so graphically described by General Gordon in his letters, the more he wished that they had never sent a single soldier into it. It was no use repeating their blunders. He did not blame the Government for having sent out General Gordon; but he blamed the newspapers. [*Laughter.*] Yes; in spite of the laughter of hon. Gentlemen, he maintained that it was the newspapers who sent out General Gordon. The Government were led away by the outcry of the nation, expressed through the newspapers. It was a national blunder. [Mr. J. Cowen: Nonsense!] It was not nonsense. He maintained that it was a national blunder—a blunder of the Government, backed up by the whole nation. There was almost universal consent that to send out General Gordon was the right thing to do. The Egyptian Government had demanded a British officer to be sent out, and he did not blame Her Majesty's Government for acceding to the demand. When the gallant General was sent out, and his position became critical, the nation again demanded that he should not be left there, and the Government very rightly took steps to rescue him. But the nation did not now demand that they should proceed any further; and his contention was that they had now a good opportunity of doing that which they had always professed that it was their desire to do—namely, to leave the Soudanese to govern themselves. No doubt, it would be a difficult thing to abandon the tribes who had helped them in their operations in the Soudan; but in what they did, let them, at any rate, have a right object set before them, and then they could vote their money with more confidence. He took that opportunity that night of protesting against the first step in an undertaking which he believed would be bitterly regretted by the whole nation before many months were over.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said, they had heard from the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down an explanation of the vote he gave 10 days ago on the Vote of Censure. The hon. Member told them that he had not given his vote on the merits of the case, but in order to keep Her Majesty's Government in Office, lest by any possibility the Opposition should defeat them, and should come into power. Well, he (Mr. Dalrymple) perfectly understood the hon. Gentleman's explanation. Whether, in the present critical stage of affairs in which the country was now placed, that was a very satisfactory kind of vote, it was for the hon. Gentleman himself to decide.

Mr. W. FOWLER said, he was sure the hon. Gentleman did not wish to misrepresent him. What he had said was that he had objected to the Motion of the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), who wished to pledge us to hold part of the Soudan, as well as to the policy of the Government.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said, at any rate, the hon. Member distinctly disapproved, on the present occasion, of the policy of Her Majesty's Government, and yet had voted 10 days ago for keeping them in Office at all hazards. The hon. Member had said he was sure he (Mr. Dalrymple) would not misrepresent him, and that was perfectly true. He could understand a policy of scuttle, though he could not approve of it; he could understand a policy of revenge and retire, though still less could he approve of that; but what he could not understand was, in the vast undertaking upon which the Government were entering, the very poor and inadequate account which they gave of their policy. The hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) had complained of hon. Members having censured the Government in strong language, and, presumably, the hon. Baronet reserved to himself alone the privilege of reflecting on the Government, because in his speech he had quoted over and over again statements made last year in direct conflict with those now put forward by the Government. What he (Mr. Dalrymple) thought the Committee had a right to complain of was that they were once again in the presence of an illustration of the see-saw policy of the Go-

vernment. The Committee, he thought, was under the impression that the ultimate result of the declarations of the Government in the important debate that recently occupied several nights was this, that some idea of a policy had been shadowed forth; but the noble Marquess at the head of the War Office (the Marquess of Hartington) had resorted to a series of adverbs which threw considerable doubt on the Government policy. This intention of "ultimately probably taking Khartoum" was not a very satisfactory basis on which to bring forward this Vote of 3,000 men. He (Mr. Dalrymple) could understand perfectly well why this very vague language was used. The Government presented at times the appearance of a policy to satisfy one set of persons, and at another time they took up a different attitude and indulged in the "ultimately probably" style of language to satisfy another class. But that was not a basis upon which the noble Marquess could put the demand for an increase of the Forces of the country. As for the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), he had no difficulty in this matter, because he could not reconcile the minimizing adverbial accounts of the noble Marquess with the Vote for 3,000 men; and so, unlike the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. W. Fowler), the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) voted as he spoke. What he (Mr. Dalrymple) felt about this matter was, that there never was a Government which asked more and told them less. The Government treated them to dissolving views of their policy which, in view of the very grave circumstances in which they were placed, were of an extremely unsatisfactory kind. The Government ought to tell the Committee definitely that they had a policy, that they would adhere to it, and that the country would not have a repetition of the terrible slaughter which took place about a year ago in the neighbourhood of Suakin, for which, so far as he knew, no reason had ever been assigned. He should like to know whether there was anyone either in or out of Parliament, on either side of politics in England or Scotland or anywhere else, who would give them a notion of a reason for the inexplicable slaughter at the battles of El Teb and Tamanieb? That slaughter, unaccountable and terrible as it was, and not followed by any definite proceedings afterwards, was due to what was very well called the policy of reluctance on the part of Her Majesty's Government. Not long ago, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland stated in the country, as if it was quite a satisfactory description of the policy of the Government, that their policy with reference to Egypt and the Soudan was one of reluctance. Well, what was a policy of reluctance? It was a policy of chopping and changing, a policy of chance, a policy of uncertainty, a policy of bloodshed, a policy of great disappointment, and very likely of ultimate disaster. Yet the policy of the Government had been a policy of reluctance throughout; and it was in the presence of a fresh declaration of that policy—for how else could they explain this "ultimately probably" reference of the noble Marquess?—that they were asked to grant these 3,000 men. He should not be inclined to take upon himself to refuse the demand which Her Majesty's Government made on their responsibility. He did not think they would ask for these 3,000 men if they did not see the necessity for having them. He gave them credit for that. But he thought that people who were prepared to agree to the demand had a right—he would not say to a more exhaustive explanation of policy—but to see some exhibition of consistency in the present declarations with those made in the course of the recent important debate. Yet it really would appear that for the purpose of removing an amount of uneasy feeling in the minds of some of their supporters the Government were making an attempt to water down and dilute the small amount of policy which had been previously put before the country. He should not give his vote against this demand for 3,000 men. He would not do so on any account, in the presence of the grave emergency in which the country was placed; but he certainly thought the Committee had a right to more information from the Government, and had a right to a more consistent declaration of policy than had yet been given.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR pointed out that the Government was under an obligation to India to provide that country with an European Force of Infantry of the Line of 11,000 men, rank

and file. For some years past, however, the European Force in India had been considerably under the proper strength, and against that state of things he now publicly protested to the Committee of the House. The deficiency of strength would have been much greater but for the large payment made out of Indian Revenues to induce soldiers to extend their service. Indeed, upwards of 7,000 soldiers, of all four Arms, had anticipated their time for retirement by agreeing to serve from two to seven years longer, at a large cost to India. It was not necessary for him to remind the Committee of the strained relations they had with Russia on the Frontier of Afghanistan. At any moment it might be necessary to assemble a large European Force on that Frontier; and therefore he appealed to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) to see that they proceeded to fulfil their obligation to India with as little delay as possible.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he did not think any Member of the House could conscientiously refuse to vote the number of troops required by Her Majesty's Government, seeing the very black look out there was all over the world so far as they were concerned, and seeing especially that at any moment they might be drawn into war on the Afghan Frontier. But there was one question he wished to bring before the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War. The new system of organization in the Army was now being very severely tested; it had, of course, been tested before, but never so severely as now. From the experience he had had of the new system, and the study he had made lately, he was satisfied that the Army was not in a fit position, especially as regarded officers; and if he did not hear that some arrangement had been made for increasing the garrisons at home, and the staff of officers, he should bring the subject forward as a substantive Motion on the Estimates for the year. They had the greatest difficulty in putting an Army Corps in the field, and when they did do so they took away all the valuable men and officers of the Home battalions. It might appear an extravagant statement; but the other day he was present at a parade in a regimental district, and he found there were only four officers, including an adjutant of Militia, for 450 men. If all the recruits contemplated were to be enlisted within the next few months, it was quite impossible they could be properly trained with the present staff of officers. He trusted arrangements would be made for increasing the number of officers.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, it appeared to him that the Government's asking for 3,000 men was very similar to their request last summer for £300,000. Everyone who knew what military operations were, knew at the time the Vote was proposed by the Government that £300,000 was an utterly inadequate sum for the work required to be done. In his opinion, 3,000 men was a wholly inadequate addition to the Army if they were to follow up the military policy which had been commenced. Let him remind the Committee of the different steps taken in the Soudan business. Gordon was sent to negotiate for the release of 27,000 soldiers, with their families, and the civilians attached to them, amounting in all to about 100,000 persons. Those people were scattered up and down the Soudan. Gordon went to the Soudan as a messenger of peace, and he was instructed to negotiate with the Mahdi for the release of the Egyptian garrisons. His first step was to make the Mahdi the Sultan of Kordofan; but the Mahdi declined to accept that proof of friendship, and returned the testimonials and insignia which were sent to him. That step having failed, Gordon changed his tactics, and the messenger of peace became one of war. He (Sir Alexander Gordon) had never yet seen that the Government condemned General Gordon's change of tactics. When he found that his peaceable message was at an end, Gordon adopted a smashing message without any remonstrance on the part of the Government so far as he (Sir Alexander Gordon) had been able to ascertain. Hence the hostility of the Mahdi. The change of policy was, he thought, a very great mistake. The next step was that Lord Wolseley was sent out to relieve Gordon. Wolseley's Expedition had been as abortive as the attempt to relieve the 27,000 soldiers and their families, the relieving of whom was the original object of Gordon's mission. Not a single soldier had been relieved by their action—a few

had escaped from Khartoum; but that was all. How many of the 27,000 soldiers were now living to be released? He did not know of any, unless they were those now defending Kassala. The object of the Government now, he feared, was a bloody triumph, a war of revenge, as was said by the Financial Secretary to the War Department (Sir Arthur Hayter). Their object seemed to be to wash out their mistakes in blood. He always thought it was a proof of the strength of this country when they did not attempt to obtain a bloody revenge after the disaster at Majuba Hill. They felt so impressed with the strength of England that they could afford to lose the credit which they did lose at Majuba Hill owing to military incapacity. The decision not to avenge the defeat they sustained in the Transvaal did not in any degree militate against the strength of England. He feared that another great mistake had been made by the Government in sending Prince Hassan with Lord Wolseley's Army; that, in itself, would create great opposition from the Mahdi and his followers. The origin, he believed, of the mission of Prince Hassan was that the Prince said he would like to be the new Ruler of Khartoum, but that he would not go unless he was proclaimed Governor with full Civil authority. It seemed he was not to be proclaimed Governor, but that he was sent there to be the Ruler under their protection. As a matter of fact, these 3,000 men were asked for in order that they might force Prince Hassan on the Soudanese against their will. It was only necessary to read Gordon's admirable diary when he first went to Khartoum to know what the fitness of the Egyptians to rule the Soudan was. General Gordon in that diary stated that the Egyptians were utterly unfit to rule any country, and he deprecated their being put over the Soudanese. That was General Gordon's opinion when he was Governor General, and knew well the people he was appointed to govern. He (Sir Alexander Gordon) was fully persuaded that the Prime Minister's private views must be very much in sympathy with the feelings expressed lately below the Gangway, but that circumstances prevented him from acting upon his pacific views. He (Sir Alexander Gordon) did not see why negotiations should not now be opened with the Mahdi, as it was originally intended. The Mahdi was not a cruel man; as the Prime Minister said only the other day, there was no great effusion of blood at the taking of Khartoum. The Mahdi treated his prisoners well; in fact, he (Sir Alexander Gordon) had never heard of the Mahdi exercising any cruelty upon his prisoners. That was a great deal to say for a man who was little better than a savage. He did hope they would pause and consider very carefully whether they ought to enter upon the war of revenge which was advocated in many quarters. He trusted that, in the words of a Motion placed upon the Paper by the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), they would only take such steps as might be necessary for the security of Egypt Proper, and nothing else. If they took a stand, for instance, at Assouan or its neighbourhood to defend Egypt at that point from any invasion of the Soudanese, should an invasion be attempted, they would be doing what would really be for the benefit of Egypt; they would be much more likely, by adopting a step of that kind, to consolidate the strength of Egypt than they would if they waged in the Soudan any war of vengeance. He hoped that Parliament would not take any precipitate action in this matter.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I do not rise for the purpose of going into any extended question, but rather for the purpose of reminding the Committee that the question now before it is a limited and a narrow one—comparatively narrow, although undoubtedly in itself a very important one. I do not think it necessary to make any remark upon this occasion to accusations against the Government and against me individually, which have been made a great many times and answered a great many times in this House, and which have been advanced against me with great loudness and confidence, but without any new verifying particulars or statements which could become matters of argument other than such as the House has long been acquainted with. Those, therefore, I pass by; but I have risen for the purpose of saying one word in relation to the speech of my hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Alexander Gordon) who has just sat down, and to another speech from my hon. Friend the Mem-

ber for the town of Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler). They have referred to a declaration made by me on behalf of the Government on the 19th of February, the day on which the House re-assembled; and they argued upon the meaning of that declaration, and upon the question whether we are to go to Khartoum, and whether on reaching Khartoum we are to remain there. Now, that declaration of mine, made as it was, is a most fair speech for quotation and for comment; and I have no doubt there will be a great deal to be said upon it at the proper time. But what I wish to point out to hon. Gentlemen is this — they are not at this moment asked to take any step whatever bearing upon or connected with that declaration. I stated, I believe on the first night of the Session, or certainly in the debate on the Motion which was made by the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote), that the Expedition, which is to have for its object the saving of the British Army from any risks connected with the force of Osman Digna and his operations, was an Expedition demanded, I believe, on military grounds quite apart from the Expedition to Khartoum. It is important that that should be clearly understood, because that is undoubtedly a question of fact in itself of considerable weight. The time will come, and it cannot be very long distant, when the House may think it necessary, and probably will think it necessary, to discuss at large the question of going to Khartoum; but my noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington), on whose statement I, for my part, rest entirely content, and whose statement, I think, I am only going now to repeat—my noble Friend has now stated distinctly in his speech to-night that the Vote that is going to be asked from the Committee—I mean, Sir, not only the Vote now in your hands, but the Vote which is to follow, and which in substance we have been debating all the evening—is a Vote relating to the Expedition that is to be made with the view of neutralizing the action or destroying, if necessary, any action of Osman Digna, and that that is a military operation absolutely necessary, whatever view you may adopt with respect to the Expedition to Khartoum. That is a point it is material to bear in mind. Do not let it be supposed I am at all endeavouring to escape discussion, either from one side or the other, in respect of the Expedition to Khartoum. I think I understand the views that are held. If I understand the speeches which have been made from the opposite Benches, they mean the reconquest and the retention of the Soudan; and if I understand the speeches made on this side of the House, they mean objection to going to Khartoum and the reconquest and retention of the Soudan. The proper time for that debate will come, and come before long. The subject of debate now before us is of a more limited character, and it was to remind the Committee of its character that I rose.

COLONEL STANLEY: Sir, I think the hon. Members in the House will hardly be able to agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, that this debate is of the limited character the right hon. Gentleman desires to give to it, because it is unquestionable that some of the considerations which are involved in this Vote are considerations which open questions of the widest importance. I took note, Sir, of the announcement of the right hon. Gentleman, that at the proper time, if not now, he would be willing to answer the questions which have been addressed to him with great force from this side of the House, and from below the Gangway on his own side, with regard to that declaration of his policy which he made on the first night of the Session. Well, now the right hon. Gentleman says this is not the proper time to discuss that declaration of policy. At the proper time, he says, he will be quite ready to discuss it, and he seems to anticipate that the proper time must be at an early date. I suppose that I am not very far wrong in believing that in the opinion of the Prime Minister the time for discussing the future policy of the Government will be when the Vote of Credit is moved. I must say it was not without some amusement that we on this side of the House heard the denunciations of the hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) and some other hon. Members who sit below the Gangway on the opposite side of the House with regard to the line which the Government are taking on this occasion. One cannot help thinking what would have been the

position of these hon. Gentlemen if they had for a moment supposed that we were likely to support them as against the Government, and to endeavour to refuse these Supplies on this occasion. One cannot help thinking that they have, so to speak, hedged with their own consciences that they, imagining that the Government were all right so far as getting the Vote was concerned, felt themselves free to indulge in whatever violence of language they chose. I cannot say that I rise on this occasion with the cordial feeling one generally supports any military operations of the Government which are proposed. So far as we on this Bench are concerned, I rise merely to support that which the Government have claimed in the exercise of their functions as the Executive Government of the country—have claimed as necessary for the Military Service of the country. We cannot help feeling that the Army in the Soudan, unfortunately—I do not now enter into a discussion as to the causes why that Army was too late to effect its object—is now in a position which, though it is not one about which one need speak in language of undue despondency, is one which cannot but raise feelings of considerable anxiety. Lord Wolseley and the gallant Army with him, we all know, will do anything that men can be expected to do; the Government have placed them in a position which must be one of inaction for some time, and necessarily of anxiety; and they are now asking for measures which they believe, and which they tell the Committee, are necessary for the purpose of the further operations of this Force. It is necessary that we must study the safety of Lord Wolseley's Expeditionary Force, and in that sense I, for one, will not be found voting against the proposal of the Government. But I do feel there is very much left to be explained on a future occasion by the language in which the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War the Marquess of Hartington proposed this Vote. We all know that if there is one thing more than another which characterizes the ability with which the noble Marquess fulfils his duties it is the straightforwardness and the directness with which he makes any statement to the House that it is his duty to make, and therefore it is with a double feeling of regret that we heard the hesitating and, I must say, halting manner in which he spoke to-night. We are now told that what was formerly announced as a distinct part of the basis of their policy is now only probably to be carried out—I think the noble Marquess spoke of the operations which might probably be ultimately necessary. Now, anyone who hears that language from the mouth of the noble Marquess must know and be fully persuaded that it must have been with considerable difficulty that the noble Marquess consented to use such very vague and general terms; therefore, I do think the Committee and the country require to know whether, about these matters, the Government are in earnest or not. Even the noble Marquess, in his best efforts to-night, could not give an idea of reality as regards the Government proposals with respect to the railway from Suakin to Berber. He spoke of that railway very vaguely; more than once he said—"If it should be necessary to carry it out." I think we have a right now, or at the proper time that the Prime Minister indicated, to challenge on all details and on general principles, if we so find it necessary, the forward policy of the Government in respect of these matters. I content myself now with saying that when the Government, on their responsibility, ask for the necessary Supplies for the service of the country, we, on our side, are bound to give them our support.

MR. R. T. REID said, he would not detain the Committee for more than two or three minutes; but he wanted to say that he should vote for the Government on this occasion, inasmuch as what was now asked was a military necessity for the safety of their troops. It was quite true that hereafter might come the opportunity of fully discussing the question whether or not Her Majesty's troops were to go to Khartoum. It was not difficult to see that they were drifting, or might drift, into a policy which might make it necessary hereafter to go to Khartoum, and therefore those Gentlemen who did not like to intrude themselves in important debates might be permitted to say a few words on this question. Now, the going to Khartoum, or the smashing of the Mahdi, could only be justified, in his opinion, on three grounds—namely, the protection of Egypt itself, the safety of their troops in Egypt, and the necessity of doing

their duty to the friendly tribes. As regarded the necessity of doing their duty to the friendly tribes, they had already practically withdrawn to a line between Korti and Dongola, and it seemed to him probable that that had been done having in view entirely their obligation to the friendly tribes, and having taken care that those friendly tribes had not suffered by their withdrawal. Now, was it not fair to bear in mind that to go to Khartoum for the purpose of smashing the Mahdi, or as the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, on the 19th of February, said, to effect the overthrow of the Mahdi's power, must necessarily involve them in a terrible amount of expenditure, both of blood and money? If it was necessary for the safety of their Army he could understand it, but their Army was now out of danger; if it was necessary for the protection of friendly tribes he could understand it, but there was no assertion that the friendly tribes were now in danger. It could not be supposed that it would be otherwise than a great enhancement of the military danger, if at some time hereafter they should endeavour to penetrate the African Desert. He hoped the Government, therefore, would take courage in the fact that their supporters, not only in that House, but in the country, would stand by them in the determination not to carry out the intention of proceeding to Khartoum, or in doing anything but that which was necessary for the protection of the Frontier of Egypt, for the protection of the tribes who were friendly towards them, and for the protection of their own troops. He thought everybody must have listened with pain to the constant attacks that had been made by hon. Gentlemen opposite upon the Government, and especially upon the Prime Minister. It was, too, with feelings of great regret that he heard his hon. Friend the Member for Liskeard Mr. Courtney tell the right hon. Gentleman, in the most solemn tones, that the consequences of the Soudan policy would rest upon his own head. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would understand that there were a great many who would sympathize with him, and support him in any pacific policy he might adopt.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR wished to say only a few words upon the Vote which was before the Committee—namely, the Vote for 3,000 more men than were comprised in the existing Establishment of the Army. The Prime Minister entered, what he (Mr. A. O'Connor) thought, a well-grounded protest against the discursive nature of the discussion which had arisen upon this Vote. He expected the right hon. Gentleman himself would have limited his remarks to the subject-matter of the Vote; but the right hon. Gentleman went on to make an observation which struck him (Mr. A. O'Connor) as an extraordinary one—namely, that they were to consider now the placing in the field of a Force which should enable the threatening attitude of Osman Digna to be counterveiled, so that any further or future advance against Khartoum might be made with ease or with safety, and the right hon. Gentleman seemed to hint that the railway to be made from Suakin to Berber was of itself no certain proof or indication that an advance must necessarily be made afterwards to Khartoum. It struck him as a very dangerous game to play to put a large Force into the field at Suakin to establish railway connection, if it should be established, between Suakin and Berber, and then to propose to the House or to any other Assembly the question whether they should or should not go to Khartoum. He could scarcely conceive a House of Commons which would assent to not going on to Khartoum, after having taken the trouble to spend large sums of money in establishing such a base. But he did not propose to follow the Prime Minister into the digression of which he was himself guilty on the Vote before the Committee. The Government desired to increase the number of soldiers, and even right hon. Gentlemen then sitting on the Front Opposition Bench said that it was really necessary for the military interests of the country to have 3,000 more men. That statement appeared to him to involve the most complete admission of administrative failure which ever came from a Government. He recollected hearing, only some three or four years ago, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer—then Secretary of State for War—standing by the box on the Table of the House, and speaking before Ministers, say that the Military Authorities had made such arrangements that they

could, at a moment's notice—he believed the words were "in a very short time"—send 17 regiments fully up to their establishment on any service for which they might be required. In the year 1882, the right hon. Gentleman repeated very much the same thing; and when he asked for the increased establishment, he declared the readiness of the War Office to provide two fully equipped Army Corps for action in any part of the world. The House granted the 3,000 men, and the right hon. Gentleman said that he had so many regiments of so many men each, and that in no future small or little wars—he had forgotten the word used—would it be necessary to apply for anything special or extra, but that there would be always a sufficient Force to send on any Expedition that might be necessary without calling on the Reserves. Now, there was no war at all; no war had been declared, and no serious reverses had been sustained in the field; the Forces abroad were concentrated on their base, and the Government was not undertaking any fresh Expedition. But, because Khartoum had fallen into the hands of the Mahdi, the Government declared that they had to come on their Reserves, and that they required 3,000 more men. If that were the case, all he would say was that the design and plans of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he was Minister for War, had not been carried out, or, if they had been carried out, that they had signally failed. Under the circumstances, it certainly appeared to him to rest with Her Majesty's Government to show why, the War Minister having obtained from the House all that he asked, immediately there came any little difficulty in the military operations, the Government should be obliged to come down to the House and make the demand that had been made that evening. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not now in his place, but he should be astonished if it were not in the recollection of the officials of the War Office that the right hon. Gentleman did make use of the expression he had quoted; and he suspected the noble Marquess could well recollect when those declarations were made by his Predecessor in Office. The Committee were now asked to meet the expense of an increased number of men, and that simply because Lord Wolseley had been required to concentrate his Forces. Simply because it was in contemplation to have an Army of 18,000 men in the Soudan, it was now necessary to have recourse to the Reserve, to embody the Militia, and to ask for a Vote of 3,000 more men, notwithstanding that at the time when the War Office last increased the Establishment, it was distinctly understood that thenceforward no small war would make any further demand in that direction upon the country.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I do not recollect the speech which the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor) has referred to. I think the hon. Member has misapprehended what was said by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time, because it could never have been contemplated, in my opinion, by my right hon. Friend that our Military Establishment should be framed on such a basis as would maintain an Army of 25,000 men like that now in Egypt and the Soudan without calling upon the House for some increase of the Establishment. But, as a matter of fact, it is not correct to say that we have had recourse to the Reserve. All that has been done is to suspend the transfer of men from certain corps to the Reserve, and to accept the services of volunteers from the Reserve. Everything that we have done now has been done on the Establishment of last year. The Committee, I think, cannot expect that very considerable operations should be conducted by the Army without steps being taken of the kind which Her Majesty's Government propose. When we come to the Vote of Credit, it will be my duty to make a statement with regard to next year; but the whole of the Vote now proposed is connected with the Establishment of the past year.

MR. LEAKE said, he wished to give his reasons for supporting Her Majesty's Government. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) had described the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) as one than whom there was no more obsequious follower of the Government. He (Mr. Leake) should also put in his claim to be considered as obsequious as the hon. Baronet, because, although he differed from the policy of the Government in sending

troops to Khartoum, he intended to support them on the present occasion. It was only a few nights ago that, by a vote of the House, the Government were again firmly placed in Office; and to put them in that position, and then on every occasion to deprive them of the tools with which they could govern, was simply to stultify themselves, and by their votes to make government impossible. Instead of demanding more pledges as to policy, more earnest declarations of what the Government intended to do, he would rather ask for fewer declarations of policy. Even if the Government pledged themselves to a "six-months'-hence-policy," how were they to foresee the circumstances which alone would make that policy possible? Having given their trust to the Government, he maintained that they ought to trust them in the management of any enterprize in which they were engaged; and so long as the House kept them in Office, they ought to give them a wide margin of discretion. He should show his adherence to that principle in the vote he was about to give, and he believed there were hundreds of thousands of voters in the country who would also support the Government for the reasons he had indicated. He believed that, whatever Her Majesty's Government might declare as to their future action in the Soudan, or whatever hon. Members might demand or oppose with regard to their policy there, circumstances would prove themselves stronger than either the Government or the respective Parties in that House. It was with the full conviction of this that he should put his trust in the Government, and should support them in the demand now made for the means wherewith to carry out their present policy.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 98; Noes 21: Majority 77.—Div. List, No. 43.]

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £912,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, to meet additional Expenditure for ordinary Army Services and for Military Operations in the Soudan."

SIR JOSEPH PEASE rose to move, as an Amendment,

"That the Item (Vote 13), of £235,000, for Works and Buildings, be reduced by £100,000."

MR. CARBUTT rose to a point of Order. He desired to speak upon Vote 12, and he understood that the hon. Baronet's Amendment referred to Vote 13.

THE CHAIRMAN said, there was no doubt it would be for the convenience of the Committee if hon. Members would speak to the various subjects which were comprised in the Estimates in the order in which they stood in the Votes; but there was nothing in the course the hon. Baronet proposed to take which would prevent the hon. Member from speaking afterwards.

MR. CARBUTT pointed out that the hon. Baronet was going to take a vote upon his Amendment, and asked whether, in the event of Vote 13 being agreed to, he would not be precluded from entering into a discussion on the preceding Vote?

THE CHAIRMAN said, that the course proposed to be pursued would not prevent the hon. Member from bringing forward his objections to Vote 12.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL stated that he objected to all the items in the Vote with the exception of £25,000, which appeared on the Votes as having already been appropriated in aid.

THE CHAIRMAN said, there would be nothing to prevent the hon. Member making his objections when the hon. Baronet's Amendment had been disposed of.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE said, he had already given Notice at the commencement of the Sitting that he would confine his Motion to an objection to the sum of £100,000, which it appeared from the foot-note on the Estimates was the sum proposed to be expended upon the Suakin-Berber Railway up to the 31st of March. There was no position in the House so little to be envied as that of the hon. Member who was out of harmony with his Party, and who rose to oppose some part of the policy of the Leaders he usually followed. This was his position that afternoon. Nothing but public duty would induce him to speak and vote against the Government in regard to their Soudan policy; but, on this occasion, he felt bound by his conscience

to do so. As far as regarded the policy of the Government, both in Egypt and the Soudan, he had done all he could to give his reasons for protesting against it, and he thought that the policy indicated that night was one which was entirely at variance with those laws, moral and Christian, which not only ought to govern the actions of individuals, but also to govern the action of one nation towards another. He had endeavoured to say all he could, from the very beginning, against the present policy of the Government. In June, 1882, before the bombardment of the Alexandrian Forts, he had put his name to a public protest forwarded to the public Press on the subject. To that bombardment he attributed a great deal of the trouble that had come upon this country. He had opposed the Vote of £2,500,000 which the Government asked for in July, 1882, in order to strengthen their Forces in the Mediterranean, on the ground that they were taking upon themselves a protectorate of Egypt, and involving themselves in responsibilities which future generations would never be able to discharge. Before the Suakin Expedition attacked Osman Digna, he joined in an address to the Prime Minister begging him to pause before they attacked the Arabs. After sacrificing 4,000 or 5,000 lives, Her Majesty's Forces immediately retired, without reaping any benefit whatever from that terrible loss of life. Now, again, he ventured to protest against the policy of trying to break the power of the Mahdi at Khartoum. That policy seemed to him to have involved an enormous sacrifice of life, which was not justified by the circumstances of the case, and up to the present moment they had reaped no advantage from it. To begin with the bombardment of Alexandria, he contended that the bombardment of those forts was the immediate cause of the riot, and the sacking of Alexandria which followed it. He thought they might say, therefore, that those proceedings were caused by the policy of Her Majesty's Government. Nothing could have justified the attack on the forts of Alexandria, but if anything could have palliated it it would have been that they had a force of soldiers with them to keep order and protect the city. But as they had not, the attack was wholly without justification or palliation. They ought either to have left the forts alone, which he thought would have been the right policy, or they ought to have had a sufficient Force to land to protect Alexandria. He found nothing in the Correspondence which showed any justification for the bombardment; but they were told that the reason of it was that they were bound to fulfil all their agreements with Tewfik Pasha. He denied, however, that Her Majesty's Government were bound to fulfil the Treaty with the Khedive after France had retired from joint action in the matter. They were then in exactly the same position as they were when Russia, some 11 years ago, repudiated the Black Sea Treaty. They then declined to enforce that Treaty for the reason that the other Powers, who were parties to it, did not think it their duty to go forward with them for that end. That was exactly the same position they were in at Alexandria. Then they fell on the Egyptian Army, and killed and wounded, it was calculated, 3,000 of that force at small loss to themselves. Next, they attacked Osman Digna in those two engagements which cost so many of those brave Arabs who formed his force. These preliminary events must have cost nothing less than 15,000 or 20,000 men, killed or wounded by their arms; and he contended that nothing that had happened could have justified such a loss of life. He gave the Prime Minister credit for far more than he had laid claim to in the better government of Egypt. He believed the right hon. Gentleman might have laid the foundation for a more permanent and better government of Egypt; but ends did not justify means, and those means were inconsistent with that international morality which ought to exist between nations. They had failed to resume trade. He was one of those who believed that it was an impossible task from the first, and when future historians looked more calmly at those events they would come to the conclusion that Gordon's life was sacrificed since they had failed to carry out his mission. Now, they were preparing for a campaign in the Soudan, and they were asked to make this railway to carry out those objects—namely, to break the power of the Mahdi, to frustrate the Slave Trade, and to protect Egypt. With regard to the first object, that of break-

ing the power of the Mahdi, what offence had the Mahdi committed against this country that his power was to be broken? Gordon was sent to deliver the garrisons, and then to hand over the government of the Soudan to the Soudanese. What was this Egyptian government of the Soudan. It had been shown on the authority of General Gordon and Colonel Stewart to be a rule that "plundered and oppressed" the people of the Soudan, and Sir Samuel Baker's view of it was expressed in very terse words. He said they were "plundering the villages, violating the women, maltreating the men, and generally making hell upon earth."

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the hon. Baronet was discussing the general Vote; but the Amendment he had given Notice of was as to the sum of £100,000 for a railway. He did not think the hon. Baronet would be in Order in discussing in full the general question of the Government policy in Egypt.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE understood that this railway was to "smash" the Mahdi; and what he was endeavouring to show was why the Mahdi should not be smashed, and why this railway, which was one of the instruments for smashing the Mahdi, should not be made. As to the railway being intended for the suppression of the Slave Trade, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) had told them that night that it was wanted purely for war purposes, and that it was not likely to be a permanent railway; and if that was so he thought the Anti-Slavery Society, which was largely composed of Peace Society members, in their zeal for this line, would have very little encouragement from the view which the Government took of it. The noble Marquess that afternoon said that this railway was required in order that Lord Wolseley's troops might be protected, and that it was necessary in order to "smash" the power of Osman Digna. But three or four nights ago a Member of the Government in the other House (the Earl of Morley) stated that the security of the Forces under Lord Wolseley could not be affected in the slightest degree by any considerations connected with the making of the railway. Now, he objected to the railway being made at all, because it seemed to him to be the most substantial guarantee the Government could place before them of its disposition to take the Soudan, hold the Soudan, and govern the Soudan. He and those who thought with him had been accused by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) of speaking against the policy of the Government and voting with it. They voted with the Government the other night; but the truth of the matter was that they only had a choice of evils, because they had the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) advocating a policy of holding more tightly Egypt and the Soudan than the Government, from their utterances, appeared prepared to do. They understood that the Government were going to retire from the Soudan and Egypt as soon they could, and they asked for still further assurances in that direction. If the object of making this railway were to put down slavery, and was to be a peaceful work, done with the consent of the Soudanese, he was glad to say that there was no one in that House, except, perhaps, his hon. Friends behind him, the Members for Andover (Mr. Francis Buxton), and Kendal (Mr. Cropper), who had more anti-slavery blood in their veins than he had, and nobody would rejoice to see it made more than he would. But if, on the other hand, it was to be made for purely military reasons, and not as a permanent work, as the noble Marquess stated that night, to break the power of the Mahdi, he would be no party to its construction. The Prime Minister, many years ago, had, in eloquent and glowing terms, denounced the wrongs of those who had suffered under the cruel despotism of the Bourbons at Naples, and the effect of his denunciation was to arouse a thrill of indignation throughout this nation. Again, at a later period he had, with the same force and eloquence, roused the whole country against the Turkish atrocities in Bulgaria—atrocities which almost froze the blood of those who read the narratives as they were published; but now the right hon. Gentleman was at the head of the Administration of his own country he was ready to use the power with which he was entrusted to crush the power of the Mahdi and those Native populations of the Soudan who had risen against

the terrible tyranny of the Egyptian Government. It was said that they must take care of those tribes who had shown a friendly disposition, and who might otherwise be imperilled. To this he fully assented; but it should be remembered that Osman Digna was 500 miles from the district held by Lord Wolseley, and that between the two were deserts almost as difficult for the Arabs to cross as for British troops. In his opinion, the position of their Forces for all needful purposes would be both safer and stronger, militarily and morally, if they were not sent upon a wild-goose chase across the Desert in order to crush the Mahdi at Khartoum, but were to retain the hold they had acquired on what might be the arranged Frontier of Egypt. Before they began to make the proposed railway they had to attack Osman Digna, and in doing that they would in all human probability add some 4,000 or 5,000 to the horrible list of killed and wounded, of which their policy in the Soudan had already made so terrible a sacrifice; and in addition to that there would be the loss that must be sustained by their own troops. The Government would have to land the materials for the railway during the terrible hot weather that was approaching at a harbour which had no very great capabilities. They would also have civilians as well as soldiers to look after and take care of. With regard to the contract for making a railway, which the noble Marquess the Marquess of Hartington had spoken of, it was one of the most extraordinary contracts he had ever heard of. It was a contract made entirely with Messrs. Lucas and Aird. He had no fault to find with those gentlemen, whom he believed to be straightforward and honourable men. Fifty miles of the railway had been ordered; and whatever the results of that railway might be in a military sense, he thought that Messrs. Lucas and Aird would take pretty good care of themselves. He should have thought, however, that the Government might have had in their Army or Navy Establishments men who were capable of supplying plans for laying down a line of railway; and if it were so, he wanted to know why this country should have to pay something like £40,000 more than would be otherwise needed, or 4 per cent commission to Messrs. Lucas and Aird, for doing work that could be done by the highly skilled engineers already in the Government employ? It should be remembered that while the line was in course of construction the contractors' men would have to be protected, and that they would also have to be taken care of in case of sickness. He thought it would be found that the difficulties that would attend the construction of the railway would be much greater than had been anticipated. The route over which it was proposed to construct 250 miles of railway rose, he was told, over very severe gradients. He believed he was right in saying—and the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) would contradict him if he were wrong—that it would have to be carried over ground which was nearly 2,700 to 3,000 feet above the level of the sea, or 1,000 feet higher than the highest point of any railway in the United Kingdom—higher than the London and North-Western Railway at Shapfell, or higher than the Barnard Castle and Tebay line where it crossed the ridge that was called "the backbone of England," forming part of the line of hills between Yorkshire and Westmoreland. And yet Her Majesty's Government called this a contractor's line. If such a railway were entitled to that description, he did not know what a contractor's line was. He might say that he had had considerable experience in regard to railways. If it were intended to be a line that would carry troops and stores from Suakin to Berber, and on which locomotives might be safely run, a great amount of expense would necessarily be incurred, and incurred under difficult and dangerous circumstances. They would have to shelter their men from the spears and bullets of the retreating foe, who, not being able to meet the British troops in the open field, would have recourse to guerilla warfare, and would pick off, by means of their sharp-shooters, our officers and men. As the railway went further and further away from the base of operations, it only being possible to lay it down from one end, the work would necessarily be a slow one, as railway plant as well as Army stores would have to be forwarded together. And when the railway was finished—if it ever should be completed—as far as

Berber, they would still be 200 miles from Khartoum and 480 from their base at Suakin, and they would still have before them the task of breaking the power of the Mahdi. It seemed to him to be one of the most hopeless tasks in which any country was ever engaged; and the result to be derived from it would certainly be not worth a tithe of the pains and trouble, blood and treasure, that would have to be expended in the prosecution of the policy initiated by Her Majesty's Government. All the while the railway was being made the troops would be lying inactive at Suakin, and every day they remained in that climate would only add to the dangers by which they were beset. In a paragraph which he had seen in a letter from one of the numerous correspondents who were at that moment engaged with the Army in the Soudan, the writer made use of the pregnant observation that "the sun of the Soudan is more fatal than the spear of the Arab." Indeed, the reports they had already received from Lord Wolseley's Army showed that fever and dysentery had already made their appearance among the troops at Korti. He did not claim to prophesy; but he considered it as among the probabilities of the case that the troops who would be stationed, during the hot weather, on the Eastern Coast of the Soudan at Suakin would have to suffer from those complaints which, according to the ordinary laws of Nature, invariably presented themselves among large bodies of men compelled to camp together under similar circumstances. He asked the Government to look for a moment at the history of the past, and not to hide from themselves the dangers of the future. Lord Wolseley's Army, which was now being gathered together at Korti, was being distributed up and down the Nile in order that they might pass the summer months in greater safety. The difficulties they had had to encounter in reaching their present position had been recorded. General Earle had spent 16 days in making a progress of 48 miles, between Handab and the scene of his victory and death. That encounter had cost them 10 soldiers, dead and missing, and 43 wounded, out of a force of 2,200 men. After that, it took 10 days for General Brackenbury's Force to get as far as Hobbeh, a distance of only 23 miles, or a little more than two miles a-day. General Buller's Army had returned to Korti, after one of the most wonderful campaigns ever recorded of the British Army—a campaign that had undoubtedly been conducted with the greatest possible bravery. The loss of that Force, including its able and gallant Commander, had been 30 killed and 450 sick and wounded out of the total of about 2,000 men. Was it to be supposed that the troops now being sent forward by Her Majesty's Government would be able to go from Suakin to Berber, in the face of Osman Digna's dispersed Army, and the Army of the Mahdi, which had not yet been dispersed, without encountering similar casualties, losses, dangers, and privations? They had already buried in the sands of the Soudan General Stewart, Colonel Eyre, and General Earle, all of them men of whom the country had every reason to be proud. When the Government Forces had reached Khartoum, after all these losses, and those that might be anticipated, what was to happen? Would the losses they would incur in the chase of the Mahdi be less than they had hitherto been; and, furthermore, would the Mahdi wait for them in Khartoum? If he did, he would probably wait for them at the head of a very large Force; and, although he might be conquered by British arms, the conquest would probably not be effected without considerable loss. If this railway were made, and the policy indicated by Her Majesty's Government were pursued, they would, he was afraid, have little to show for it but the graves and prowess of their countrymen, as the Mahdi would still be ranging loose in the Soudan, a country which General Gordon himself had told the Government it was hopeless to conquer, and which, if conquered, it would be useless to retain. What, he asked, was the present position of their Military Forces? They were sending to the Soudan the very pick of their Indian troops at a time when they might be much better employed in going to the Frontier of Afghanistan. The best regiments in this country were also being sent out to a deadly and inhospitable climate. They were calling up the Militia from their industrial pursuits, and sending them to their garrison towns—one of the largest and best Militia regiments in the County of Durham having recently

been sent to do garrison duty at Colchester. And all that was being done in order to carry on a war which Her Majesty's Government might have avoided, or which, at least, could be fought out in a better place than the Soudan. If the Mahdi chose to advance to the North, or Osman Digna desired to overrun the Eastern Frontier, it seemed to him (Sir Joseph Pease) that both could be met and fought on better terms, and certainly on much better ground, in a neighbourhood much further from the Equator. What, he asked, was the effect of the policy of Her Majesty's Government upon the relations of this country with Foreign Powers? Russia, following her usual policy, was advancing on our Afghan Frontier in a way to which no hon. Member of that House could shut his eyes. Russia had always found the difficulties of other countries to be her own opportunity; and, seeing England engaged at the present moment in a hopeless movement in the Soudan, she was taking advantage of that position to advance on our Afghan Frontier. This policy of advance on the part of Russia could only be met by a display of firmness which he hoped would characterize the action of Her Majesty's Government. The result of their policy in the Soudan had shown itself in the Army and Navy Estimates, which gave evidence of an increase this year, as compared with last; while, as compared with the first year in which the Government took Office, there was a total increase of between £4,000,000 and £5,000,000. Their policy would also show itself speedily in the taxation they were compelled to lay on the people; and although the present year would close more favourably for the Government than was at one time anticipated, owing to certain sums required for military purposes not coming within the financial year, he felt tolerably certain that they would have to do that which he should be sorry to see done—namely, ask the House to put off the annual payment which had been made for so many years in reduction of the National Debt, the alternative being that they would have to tax the people, whose industries, both agricultural and commercial, were at the present moment in so depressed a condition. He begged to thank the Committee for having listened with so much attention to his somewhat lengthened remarks. He certainly entertained a strong feeling against the policy of the Government in what he regarded as their fruitless search after the Mahdi. He was no pessimist. He fully believed in the gallantry and bravery of their soldiers, which was displayed at the present day as conspicuously as in former times. He believed, also, in the immense resources of this country, as a rich and powerful nation, able to back up, by its own wealth and vigour, the armies it might send forth. But he was of opinion that the blood and treasure of this country ought not to be expended in operations that could be attended neither with honour nor glory to the English nation. He opposed the policy of Her Majesty's Government on those grounds; and he might add that his opposition was based on grounds even higher still. He opposed that policy because he believed it to be internationally wrong, contrary to the best precepts of morality, and out of harmony with the teachings of that common Christianity which most of them professed. He, therefore, begged to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum which he had mentioned.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Item (Vote 13), of £235,000, for Works and Buildings, be reduced by £100,000." —(*Sir Joseph Pease*)

MR. BRAND: The hon. Baronet who has just spoken has made a severe attack on the proposal to construct a railway from Suakin to Berber, as well as upon the agreement that has been made between Her Majesty's Government and Messrs. Lucas and Aird; but I noticed that in the course of his speech the hon. Baronet did not mention any details of that agreement to which he took serious objection; and I must here remark that, looking at all the circumstances of the case, I do not think the terms of that agreement as between Her Majesty's Government and Messrs. Lucas and Aird can be regarded as specially advantageous to that firm. The hon. Baronet has, to my way of thinking, enormously exaggerated the difficulties of the proposed undertaking. He seems to have imagined to himself that the difficulties in the way of constructing such a railway are immense; and I am bound to admit that if they are anything like those he has described it certainly

would be impossible to make that railway. But let us see what those difficulties are, according to the view taken by the hon. Baronet. In the first place, the hon. Baronet has said that, during every day the railway was being made Her Majesty's troops would be lying inactive at Suakin. But he seems to have forgotten that with those troops there is a sufficient amount of camel transport to take them away to the hills and place them in a fairly good climate, which is much better comparatively than that of Suakin. The hon. Baronet further told the Committee that it would be impossible to make the railway in the face of the attacks that would be made upon those engaged upon its construction by the enemy. I think, however, the Committee will be inclined to agree with me that the able Generals who have been consulted on this matter, and the other military men whose opinions have been taken upon the question, are entitled to have more dependence placed upon their opinion than can be accorded to the opinion of the hon. Baronet. The military opinion we have received upon the subject of this railway is that, as far as the question of attack from the enemy is concerned, there will be no difficulty in the construction of the contemplated line of rails if the Forces under Osman Digna are, in the first instance, met and defeated. My object in rising to answer the hon. Baronet was not to follow him through those parts of his speech which related to the policy of Her Majesty's Government in Egypt generally, but simply to reply to what he has put forward with reference to the question of constructing the Suakin-Berber Railway. Upon this point I have to say, therefore, that in my belief the proposed railway is rendered absolutely necessary as long as the policy stated by Lord Wolseley is followed out —I refer to the military policy advocated by him of operating on Berber by converging two Forces, one having its base at Suakin, and the other its base at Cairo—or, to speak more accurately, I should say, with its base at Alexandria, its head-quarters being, however, at Korti. I maintain that there are three grounds on which this railway is necessary. In the first place, it is essential that the railway should be constructed—and I will show that it is so—because it is a military necessity, or, at any rate, there are matters of such military importance involved as really amount to a military necessity. In the second place, to the extent to which the railway may be finished it will afford the means of saving expenditure; and, in the third place, I would say, in answer to the criticism of the hon. Baronet, that assuming the railway to be a necessity, and that it should be made in the manner proposed, Her Majesty's Government are taking the best means—and, indeed, the only means in their power—to insure its construction. Let the Committee look for a moment at the circumstances in which we are placed. We have, at the present moment, two Armies operating in the Soudan. There is the Army of General Graham with its base at Suakin, and there is also the Army of Lord Wolseley with its base at Korti. Surely the construction of the proposed railway must be a matter of immense importance to the Force under the command of General Graham. Unless the country around Suakin is pacified, and Berber is occupied by a friendly Force, it will be impossible for General Graham's Force to advance on Berber in the absence of the proposed means of railway transport, without a huge provision of transport camels; and I may here state that the War Department has had a careful calculation made with regard to the amount of camel transport that would be absolutely indispensable to the requirements of such a Force as that of which General Graham has command, and I find that from 50,000 to 70,000 camels are estimated as being necessary to meet the wants of that contingent in the matter of transport. To maintain such an array of camels with the Force for a period of one year would involve an expenditure of something like £3,350,000. Therefore I repeat that, as far as regards General Graham's Force, assuming it is to advance on Berber, a railway, if it can be made, is a military necessity.

An hon. MEMBER: Why should we go there?

MR. BRAND: The hon. Gentleman asks a question of policy with which I do not propose to deal in the remarks I now feel called upon to make. I am simply dealing with the military question as it affects the railway proposed to be made from Suakin to Berber; and I ask the Committee to consider whether, as regards Lord Wolseley's Force, the projected line is not of almost equal im-

portance to the position it assumes in the case of General Graham? If Lord Wolseley is to advance with his Force on Berber, is it possible to exaggerate the enormous importance to the progress of that Force of Lord Wolseley having for the transport of supplies and munitions, as well as his sick and wounded, a railway within 100 miles of his head-quarters, and less than 250 miles from the sea at Suakin? For however great may be the advantages of the Nile route, and to whatever extent it may be possible for Lord Wolseley to improve that route, we, nevertheless, have to recognize the fact that the Nile route from Berber to Cairo covers a distance of 1,420 miles. I do not say it is an impossibility; but I do say it would be a difficult thing to maintain a line of communications extending over so great a distance. I have said I will show the Committee that the railway from Suakin will afford the means of effecting a considerable saving of expenditure, always assuming that these operations are conducted in the manner contemplated; and I will now proceed to prove that it will be a saving, not only in its entire length, should it be completed, but to the extent of every 50 miles of rail that may be laid down. It must be obvious that for every 50 miles of railway we may make we shall necessarily require fewer and fewer animals for purposes of transport. I have had a calculation made, and I find that if we succeed in making a railway as far as Ariab, instead of a camel transport to the number of 60,000 or 70,000 animals, only from 15,000 to 20 000 would be required. Then there remains the question asked by the hon. Baronet, whether the intended railway can be made in time? I am not about to commit myself to any confident prediction on that point. I have no doubt that hon. Gentlemen will be able to quote the opinions of civil engineers on the one side, while I, again, am able to quote the opinions of civil engineers on the other In point of fact, we might have almost as many opinions as there are engineers. But, at any rate, we do know this with regard to the route that has been chosen —that an engineer, Mr. Wyld, went over the line of country, some time ago, on behalf of a syndicate that had been formed for the purpose of making such a railway, and that in his Report it was estimated that a railway, such as that which we propose, could be made at a cost of about £4,500 per mile. Mr. Wyld reported that there were no serious engineering difficulties; and from this source, as well as from other information in our possession, we have every reason to believe that the gradients are not severe. We believe that the railway can be made, at any rate, to a certain distance that cannot but be useful. A great deal has, unfortunately, been said about this railway, in absolute ignorance of what are the real facts. There was a statement made in "another place" the other day with respect to this railway; and it was then suggested, or asked, whether we were sending out stone materials and iron girders for the bridges? The answer is, of course, we are not doing anything of the kind. It would be absurd to say we are going to build stone and iron bridges. Bridging material will, no doubt, be sent out; but it will be composed of timber. I will not say that this railway can be made in its entirety for the use of the troops sent to the Soudan; but I will say this—that I feel confident that 50 miles of railway can be made; that I believe 100 miles can be made; and that I see no reason why 170 miles should not be made in the time at which it will be needed. But what I desire to insist on is this—that whether 50 miles, or 150 miles, or 170 miles of railway are made, whatever is done in that direction will be of immense military importance. Having shown, as I think I have succeeded in doing, that, granting certain premises, this railway will be of importance in a military sense, and having further shown, as I also think I have done, that if it is made for the purposes I have stated, it will affect a saving of expenditure, I have now only to deal with the statement of the hon. Baronet that we ought to have employed other means. I contend that Her Majesty's Government have adopted the best and the only means that were available. It would have been impossible for the Royal Engineers of this country to have made such a railway as that which they propose to construct from Suakin to Berber unless they had at their disposal an organized Railway Corps, which, at the present moment, the country does not possess. I may state that I was convinced, from the

evidence before the Committee on Commissariat and Transport last year, that it would be madness to attempt to carry out such an undertaking without an organized Railway Corps. On the other hand, it is perfectly true that if we had been able to obtain the assistance of the Public Works Department in India it might have been possible for us to have made the railway. But for certain reasons, into which I will not enter at the present moment, it was not deemed desirable to adopt that course. Under these circumstances, therefore, the only means that were at the hands of Her Majesty's Government were to accept the offer of Messrs. Lucas and Aird, who are eminent contractors. I believe the decision arrived at as to the gauge of the railway—the English gauge—to have been the right one. The English gauge does not require such careful and accurate laying as the narrow gauge, and it has the advantage of possessing more stability than any other gauge. I may add that the whole of the materials and tools were actually in the hands of Messrs. Lucas and Aird, and were supplied at once. They were shipped, indeed, within a week of the time the order was given; and I do not believe that anything better could have been done by any other country. I have now dealt, as I said I should do, only with the question of the necessity for this railway from a military point of view, and the capacity of the agents who have been employed to construct it. I am quite certain of this—that if we have a clear course—that is to say, if, in a military sense, the country can be cleared sufficiently for the purpose, and if we have a sufficiency of Native labour, there is no reason why a considerable portion of this railway may not be made. I will go further, and say that, under these circumstances, I feel confident that a considerable portion of the railway will be made in time to be of great service to our Forces in the Soudan.

THE CHAIRMAN: I wish to call the attention of the Committee to the mode in which I propose to put this Question to it. It is as follows:—"That the Item (Vote 13), of £235,000, for Works and Buildings, be reduced by £100,000."

MR. CARBUTT: I wish to ask, as a point of Order, whether, if you put that Vote 13, it will be competent for me to go back to the previous Vote?

THE CHAIRMAN: I have already informed the hon. Member that there is nothing to prevent his speaking on any portion of this Vote. He himself informed the Committee that he did not intend to propose a reduction of the Vote of any item at any time.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, he did not propose to deal with the admirable political and financial *résumé* of the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Joseph Pease). He entirely sympathized with it, and, on some points, he agreed with it; but he would say to the hon. Gentleman, as he would say to certain Gentlemen below the Gangway, that it was no use crying over spilt milk. They had got into a very great mess. He did not say how they had got into it, because hon. Gentlemen had been labouring for weeks past, he might say for months and years past, on that side of the House to point out how very faulty the policy of the Government had been; and he only regretted that, as the hon. Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) and other Members below the Gangway on the Ministerial side held such strong views about the policy of the Government that they had not helped the Opposition about 10 days ago when the Vote of Censure was under discussion. The hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. W. Fowler) had, that evening, given them a reason—and a very bad one—why these Gentlemen had not supported the Opposition; it was a bad reason from the hon. Gentleman's own point of view, but a good one from the point of view of the Opposition, because he (Lord Eustace Cecil) was sure no one on the Opposition side of the House was at all anxious to undertake the task of Government at this moment. The question before the Committee had been very properly narrowed by the ruling of the Chairman—in the spirit if not in the letter—to this—whether the railway could be made under the circumstances detailed; and whether it was advisable, from a military point of view as well as from a political point of view, to construct it? The hon. Gentleman the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Brand) had commenced his speech by telling them that the railway was to be made from Suakin towards Berber—and the preposition "towards" was a very

doubtful part of his speech. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) was at a loss to know what the "towards" alluded to. Was the railway to widen out on an uncertain course—no one could tell where—in the Desert? He did not know; nor did he know whether it was to lead to transactions which would involve the expenditure of an immense treasure as well as a great deal of blood. But this he did know—that when the hon. Gentleman went on to say that there would be no difficulty—he had marked the words—about making the railway, provided Osman Digna was defeated——

MR. BRAND: I said no military difficulty, so far as the enemy was concerned.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: Provided Osman Digna was defeated?

MR. BRAND: Yes.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: But Osman Digna had already been defeated, and defeated twice over; but he had never yet been caught. It was one thing to defeat him, and it was quite another to catch him. Osman Digna was as ubiquitous as the Mahdi; and probably if they succeeded in doing that which they were going to attempt—namely, the smashing of his Force—Osman Digna himself would retire to the hills with the troops that remained with him after the slaughter which doubtless would take place In a very short time after his defeat, more especially as the summer season came, and as the weather got hotter and hotter, Osman Digna would descend again with his marauding parties, and, no doubt, would make the construction of the railway an almost superhuman task. He had read lately—and, no doubt, other hon. Members were also acquainted with the fact—that over and over again in their attempts to construct fortifications at Suakin the Arab Tribes had harassed Her Majesty's soldiers. The Arabs, it was said, were so clever and so venturesome that every night, whenever a fortification had been partly made, numbers of them descended upon it, and took away the sandbags or partly destroyed them. In this way sometimes the work of days was destroyed in a single night. He would ask his hon. Friend, and every reasonable man in the Committee, how they were going to insure, without an enormous amount of trouble and expense, the making of this railway by Natives and workmen brought from he did not know where? How many troops would be required to keep the marauding parties off? How was it intended to sustain these troops, because, after all, the construction of a railway was a work of time? They knew that it could not be made in a moment, and that even if the 50 miles which were talked of were finished it would probably be months before even that part of the work was out of hand, and all this time they would have to feed their troops, their camels, and their animals, and they would have to look after their labouring parties. It was absurd for the hon. Member to tell him, or to tell anyone else, that there would be no difficulty in making the railway when Osman Digna was defeated. He contended that there would be the greatest difficulty, and that it would entail the greatest expenditure both in money and men. As he thought the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease had said, it was not so much the Arab spears that they had cause to be frightened of as the sun. When they considered that many of the men who would be employed upon the railway—many of the labourers and navvies — were brought from this country, that they were men whose habits were not those of the strictest sobriety, and that they would have to be exposed to the fiercest rays of a tropical sun, with, at the best, extremely bad water to drink, it must be apparent to everyone that the danger was enormous. Could it be supposed that these men would not be subjected to the danger of enteric fever, and that, labouring as they would be, they would not be visited with disease? Why, it was possible that during the hottest months it might be found necessary to stop the work on the railway entirely. But, to proceed, he would refer to the three reasons which had been given in favour of the making of the railway. The hon. Gentleman had said, first, that it was a military necessity. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War the Marquess of Hartington, early in the evening, had said that the railway was absolutely necessary. The noble Marquess had said that whereas their going to Khartoum was only probable—and that was understood to be the military opinion of Lord Wolseley—the making of the railway from Suakin to Berber

was an absolute necessity. Well, when Lord Wolseley gave that opinion he (Lord Eustace Cecil) presumed he meant to say that the making of the railway was an absolute necessity if the Government wished to avoid the great mortality which, no doubt, would take place amongst the camels and the beasts of burden employed in the Transport Service. But beyond the fact of saving a certain amount of money when the railway was made—and he laid some stress upon that—and beyond its being a military necessity, he could not see that there was any positive necessity for bringing up troops and stores from Suakin. It could be done, but it would be done at very great expenditure. It certainly could not be done before the autumn, and they certainly could not make any advance before that time. He did not suppose that it was intended to make any advance before the completion of the railway. Then it really came to this—that it was a question of expenditure. With regard to expenditure, they were on exceedingly doubtful ground. When he looked upon that side of the question he stood perfectly appalled at what the Government proposed. He had listened in astonishment and with amazement that night to the noble Marquess as he detailed the various works that were to be executed, and the expenditure which was to be incurred, by this country. Tramways had been spoken of as well as steamboats on the Nile, and a Nile railway; an increase in the Army had been spoken of, and the construction of a railway from Suakin to Berber. They heard also that a quantity of huts were to be obtained, and, no doubt, these were in the highest degree necessary for the housing of their troops in the hot season; and on this matter he would express an earnest hope that care should be taken to have the huts properly fitted and constructed of the best material. Well, every one of the items he had mentioned would be costly, and the whole undertaking seemed to land one into a perfect sea of expenditure; and what he complained of, so far as the noble Marquess's statement was concerned, and also of the speech of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Brand), was that no estimate was given to the Committee of the prospective expenditure. Whenever they came to ask about the expenditure they were put off by such observations as—"Oh, it will all be included in the Vote of Credit." Well, that Vote of Credit they were all anxious to see. He was sure hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the opposite side of the House, whom he had no doubt felt very deeply on this question of expenditure, were extremely anxious to see what the total expenditure of the Government would be, and what burden all the outlay that was taking place in the heart of the Soudan would lay upon the shoulders of the people of the country. Those hon. Members, and hon. Members sitting on the Opposition side of the House, not only wished to know what the policy of Her Majesty's Government was generally, but were anxious to know whether the Government had any minds at all as to what sum was likely to be spent on the military operations in the Soudan? They were not without precedents in regard to these matters—they were not without precedents of a very disagreeable kind in regard to these matters in Africa. It must be in the recollection of the Committee, as it was in his recollection, how enormously the expenditure in connection with the Abyssinian Campaign had grown. The Conservatives were in Office at the time, and he was not now saying anything about who was responsible for the drawing up of the Estimates. All he knew was that the Estimates were drawn up, and that those who had to officially submit them in that House declared that, according to the figures which were put before them, the expenditure on the war would only amount to some £3,000,000. But what was the fact? Why, the expenditure in connection with the Abyssinian War came to £9,000,000, showing how completely falsified had been all the Estimates drawn up by hon. Gentlemen seated at their desks in Downing Street or elsewhere, though, no doubt, they were prepared as carefully as their knowledge enabled them to prepare them. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) contended, therefore, that the noble Marquess and the other officials interested in this matter were bound to take the House of Commons into their confidence, so far as they could, upon this question of expenditure. What he urged the Government to do was to give every item of information they had, not to

pledge themselves to any limit; because, even with all the information at the hands of the Government officials, he very much doubted whether the Estimates founded upon it would be very trustworthy in the end. The Government were bound to put every single figure they could before the Committee; and what he complained of particularly that night was that the noble Marquess had given them a very meagre statement indeed. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken (Mr. Brand) had told them that a railway of this kind might cost £4,500 per mile; but he (Lord Eustace Cecil) would put it to anyone who had ever had anything to do with the construction of railways in savage or semi civilized countries whether such a figure was trustworthy? Let them take South America, and he would put it to anyone who had any knowledge of what Brazilian railways had cost whether such works could be carried out for £4,500 a mile? He happened incidentally to have some little information upon this point, and he believed that it was not at all quoting an out-of-the-way figure when he said that Brazilian railways had cost as a rule £10,000 per mile. Therefore, when the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Brand) told him that the railway was only going to cost £4,500 per mile——

MR. BRAND: I never said anything of the kind.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: But the hon. Gentleman led the Committee to suppose that railways of that kind could be constructed for £4,500 a mile.

MR. BRAND: I did not say anything of the kind My noble Friend misunderstood me What I said was, that some time ago Mr. Wyld, an engineer, went over the line for a syndicate that had been formed—the construction of a railway being at that time contemplated—I cannot say whether of a metre gauge or of an ordinary English gauge; and that it was believed at the time that the work could be completed at the rate of £4,500 per mile.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, he quite accepted the hon. Gentleman's explanation; but, at the same time, when figures were put before the Committee, it was always supposed that they were intended as a guide, or to lead hon. Members to form some judgment upon the question of cost. When that sum per mile was put before the Committee, he had thought himself entitled to take it as a possible or probable estimate—for they were in the land of probabilities—which the gentlemen who had given the information to his hon. Friend (Mr. Brand) and the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) had arrived at after due consideration of the subject. Well, he now came to the question which the hon. Baronet the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) had lightly touched upon. The hon. Baronet, he thought, had stated that a great deal of the material to be used in the construction of the Suakin-Berber railway was old material from the Hull and Barnsley railroad. He had understood the hon. Baronet to state that some of this material was not in the very best state of preservation.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: I do not wish to imply that by any means in what I said, or that Messrs. Lucas and Aird had shipped old and worn-out material from the Hull and Barnsley Railway. I would give them credit for the highest integrity in the matter.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, that at any rate, although he did not mean to say that the material was improper material to be used for the construction of the railway, still it had been used, and could not, therefore, be said to be in the same condition in which it was when it was perfectly new. He should like to know whether the material taken out was fitted for the purpose of railway construction in a country like the Soudan? Hon. Members knew that in these tropical climates great mischief was done by insects—by such things as white ants. These insects devoured almost everything before them. He had even heard of their eating tin cans. Altogether, without wishing to cast a slur upon the integrity of Messrs Lucas and Aird, it was quite possible that this railway material sent out to the Soudan might be found hardly fitted for railway purposes in such an exceptional climate. On such matters as these he should like very much to have a little further information. Then, again, with regard to water. They had had hinted, in answers which had been given to Questions put in that House, that all the water to be used by the labourers and by the troops along the railway was to be taken from the Red Sea, and pumped through pipes.

Questions had been asked of his hon. Friend the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Brand), where the pumps to be used in these operations had been ordered—whether in America or in this country? He (Lord Eustace Cecil) had understood, from the answer the hon. Member had given, that there was no doubt that pumps and pipes had to be used. Then it must be borne in mind that pumps and pipes added very much indeed to the expense—that whether the whole outlay could be covered by any figures corresponding to £4,500 per mile he should take to be exceedingly doubtful. He said, therefore, without going further into detail in this matter, that it was perfectly clear they were really taking a great leap in the dark. They really did not know enough of the country, or of the conditions under which the railway was to be constructed and laid down, or with regard to the number of men who would be required to make it, or the number of soldiers who would be required to defend it from the hordes which Osman Digna might collect and send down against it at any moment after he had been smashed. And they were not sure that after all, when all the expenditure of blood and treasure had taken place, when this railway had been constructed "towards Berber," wherever that might be, the Government would be quite certain that they were going to Khartoum, or even going on with the war at all. They were in a state of uncertainty in consequence of the speech of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington); and he entirely agreed with what had fallen from the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) that they were left in a state of uncertainty whether the policy of March, 1885, would be the policy of September in the same year. If the hon. Member was right, what would become of the present Estimate of expenditure? Though he did not quite agree with the views of hon. Members below the Gangway on the opposite side of the House, yet he sympathized with their objections with regard to expenditure. He also objected to the expenditure the Government were incurring; but he did not wish to oppose it. (*Laughter.*) Hon. Gentlemen laughed, but he would tell them why. He did not object, because they had got into such a tremendous mess. They had sent their troops out, and, as had been stated over and over again, it would be quite impossible, without a loss of *prestige*—of which they had not too much now-a-days—to retire before the Mahdi. There was only one alternative left—they must go on with the operations. He had been opposed to the policy of the Government from the first—that was to say, from the moment of the bombardment of Alexandria to the present time. He had been opposed to all their expenditure in Egypt; but he was in that unfortunate position in which he thought other hon. Gentlemen in the House who had any share of responsibility found themselves—that was to say, he could not refuse the Supplies to the Government. But he did stand there and say that he had a right to exercise the critical powers at his command. He had a right to say that the Government, who had brought them into this scrape, should now take them into their confidence and make a clean breast of the whole business, so far as their information enabled them to do, and that they should tell them the full extent of the vast expenditure of treasure and blood which was likely to take place. He was glad to see that the Prime Minister had just entered the House. He held that right hon. Gentleman to be primarily responsible for what was taking place. He did not intend to quote the Prime Minister's speeches. He had attempted to do that once or twice in the House; and on every occasion, if he had not happened to have the precise extracts from those speeches in his pocket, the right hon. Gentleman had come down upon him. But he had read and listened to the right hon. Gentleman's speeches and statements over and over again; and he was bound to say that he had formed very much the same opinion with regard to them as had been formed by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). He could not help saying—and he did not think it could be too often repeated—that a great many of the answers of the Prime Minister in the House itself, and a great many of his speeches outside of it, had had a very mischievous effect both in the Soudan and elsewhere. They had had a mischievous effect in this country, although the evil created at home had been very small in extent as compared

with that created amongst the Natives in Egypt and the Soudan. Whether it was that they approached these questions without the power of duly understanding the Oriental and Native mind he did not know; but he was quite certain that if the Prime Minister would give that calm consideration which his great capacity and great intellect enabled him to give to these matters, he would see, perhaps, that there was a little reason in that which was constantly being urged from the Opposition side of the House—namely, that the more guarded a speech on the question of policy was it would be far better for their troops, and for everybody concerned in the Government service at the present time in Egypt. He was quite certain of this—that if the troops were asked, and if the bonds of military discipline permitted them to speak, they would say one and all, from Lord Wolseley down to the smallest drummer boy, that the statements and the speeches which had been made had increased their difficulties enormously; that unless there could be adopted some firm, some real substantial policy of a permanent nature which the whole world could acknowledge and believe in, and which would not only be stated but acted up to, they might just as well pull down the flag of this country at once, make terms with the Mahdi, and, to use a well-known word, carry out that policy of rescue and retire, or, as he ought to say, retire and scuttle, as soon as they possibly could. He made these remarks in no spirit of hostility to this particular Vote. He was prepared—and he thought all hon. Gentlemen on that (the Opposition) side of the House were prepared—to support Her Majesty's Government, simply because they wished to support the country in its great difficulty and in its great danger, and in the great trouble which, unfortunately, by the action of the Government, and the action of the Government alone, it was placed in at that moment.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: I am anxious that my noble Friend (Lord Eustace Cecil) should not run away with the impression that I intended to imply that the plant shipped by Messrs. Lucas and Aird was not fit to be sent out for the construction of the railway from Suakin to Berber. Messrs. Lucas and Aird are men of the highest character and experience, and I would not for a moment cast the slightest reflection upon their integrity. What I did mean to imply was that it might be a very good arrangement for them, as they were getting "fair and reasonable" prices for the plant—prices according to the contract to be fixed by themselves.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, he quite accepted the explanation of the hon. Baronet.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, he wished to protest against the policy which he believed the Government had adopted in great haste and in a moment of great excitement. They had decided to send Lord Wolseley to the relief of General Gordon and when the gallant General plunged into his great enterprize, no doubt, the great majority of the people of this country approved of the step decided upon by the Government, although there must have been in many minds serious misgivings with regard to the advisability of the course General Gordon had pursued. He submitted to the Committee that they were now in a somewhat different position than they were when the hasty decision was come to about going forth to Khartoum and overthrowing the Mahdi there; the proposal that was now before them was for making a railway from Suakin to Berber. But when that suggestion was first made by Lord Wolseley he did not contemplate withdrawing his troops some hundreds of miles from the position he then occupied. They were told, in justification of the course the Government had determined upon, that it was absolutely necessary that they should go to Khartoum, in order, amongst other things, that the friendly tribes who had been co-operating with them might not be discouraged and left in the lurch; but he wished to ask in what position they had left those friendly tribes upon the hundreds of miles of their retreat? Now, at that moment the House of Commons was in this position. Right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite were most cordial, almost gushing, in their readiness to support the Government in this expenditure. ["Oh, oh!"] Why, every hon. and right hon. Gentleman who had spoken from the other side of the House had said he was quite prepared to support the Government on this Vote; but the Committee had received the intimation that their sup-

port was to be given on one condition; and that was that the Party on the other side of the House, when possibly all the mischief had come out of the policy which the Government were pursuing, might then be at liberty to turn round and brand the Government, and the Liberal Party generally, not only as blunderers, but as political criminals. It was said there was a large party who wished to save the Government from that future humiliation; and it was for that reason he had ventured, as representing a large constituency, to express what he believed to be the feeling of the great majority of the town of which he had the honour of being one of the Representatives, against the course which the Government had entered upon. From what had dropped from the mouths of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, he still believed there was a disposition on the part of the Government to reconsider the decision they had come to. He thought the Party on the Ministerial side of the House would not necessarily hurry the Government into any hasty declarations of a change of policy. Happily, there were six months of hot weather abroad, and of cooling temperature at home; cooling, because this country would look more deliberately into the situation. Further, the political temperature would be reduced by the consideration that the expenditure which the Government was incurring, and the increased taxation which would ensue, would bring into play the feelings and the determination of large numbers of people in the country, who, up to that moment, had counted for little in the decision that had been taken. Now, he wished to point out that most of the Gentlemen who had spoken from the other side of the House were county Representatives. The hon. and gallant Baronet Sir Walter B. Barttelot was a county Representative; and he, and almost every Gentleman who had spoken from the other side of the House, had not as yet felt the touch of the new voters in the country. It was worth notice that those who had opposed the policy of Her Majesty's Government, and sought to restrain them in their undue ardour for these military enterprizes, did represent the great populations of the country; and he ventured to intimate to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite that they might find they had miscalculated the feeling of the country when, at the next General Election, they came to deal with Hodge, and with those persons to whom increased burdens were by no means agreeable. He could not help saying, in passing, that the Party opposite had attempted to hang by the skirts of General Gordon in a most unworthy manner. Up to the 4th of February everybody in the country had a right to believe that the Military Expedition sent for the relief of General Gordon was about to be successful; and on the 4th of February the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) happened to be speaking at the "True Blue Club" in the City of Gloucester. The right hon. Gentleman replied to the toast of the county Members of the House of Commons; and in *The Times* of the 5th of February he was reported to have asked the members of the Club—

> "Were the lives and was the money spent in the Soudan to go for naught but the rescue of a man who had said he was perfectly able to take care of himself?"

His (Mr. Illingworth's) belief was that, judging from what was just let out at the most unfortunate moment possible, if the Military Expedition had been successful, and Gordon had been rescued, the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) would have turned round on the Government and have said that the success was a paltry business, and that Gordon was never in any serious danger, and ought to have been left to himself; but, having gone to the Soudan, it was their duty to retain the whole of it and get out of it, whatever profit it was capable of. In his (Mr. Illingworth's) opinion, the duty of those who represented large constituencies where the householders had votes was to intimate to the Government that there was really no enthusiasm for the line upon which they had entered. He and his hon. Friends were willing to make every allowance for the position in which the Government had found itself. The noble Lord who last spoke (Lord Eustace Cecil) had said that he objected to the whole of the policy of the Government—from the first blunder of the bombardment of Alexandria to the last enterprize which ended before Khartoum. It was somewhat singular that, so far as he (Mr.

Illingworth) had been able to ascertain, the entire Party opposite, whenever a critical moment had come, had supported the Government. The Conservative Party had been so concerned to maintain the Executive, whether right or wrong, that it had never at any moment, so far as he knew, separated itself from that Party whose policy the noble Lord said was so disastrous and so unsatisfactory. There might be individual exceptions; but, speaking generally of that Party, and especially of right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench, it was unfortunately true that the Government would be able to include them in whatever misfortunes and crimes this country had been guilty of in this Soudan business. He only wished to say, further, that they were not very far from the time of a General Election; and he hoped the electors of the country would speak out unmistakably with regard to these military enterprizes, which had resulted in great loss of life, and in political disasters from first to last. Now, the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government had pleaded over and over again, with some force, that the Government found itself in a very unfortunate position in taking Office, owing to engagements to which the previous Government had committed them. Well, that was true; but the blame which, he thought, might fairly be against the Government was this—that, with all the right hon. Gentleman's power and ability, he did not extricate himself and his Government from those conditions. He (Mr. Illingworth) believed there were moments when it might have been possible—it might have been done. When France refused to join them and withdrew her Fleet from Alexandria, surely that was a time when the right hon. Gentleman and the Government might have asked themselves whether an opportunity had not been afforded for the reconsideration of the terms of the agreement by which the two Governments had bound themselves. He (Mr. Illingworth) was bound to make in some respects a painful confession, and that was that no Government found it easy to escape from the spirit which was generated by the London Press, London society, and the official classes in the country, and he, for one, was not at that moment expecting to influence the decision of the Government; but he was venturing to suggest to many outside, who only wanted to know the right course to pursue, what it was possible for them to do. Now, if they were really to restrain the Government, it would be necessary for the people of the country to speak out most distinctly. They had had strained relationship, they were told, with France, with Germany, and they were also in a somewhat critical position, it was to be feared, with regard to another Great Power. Well, Governments, he believed, found themselves so hemmed in by the militarism of the day that unless the people spoke over the heads of the Government there was no escape from the misfortunes which now surrounded them. He hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) was in his place, because he did not hesitate to say that he entirely sympathized with that hon. Gentleman's speech the other day to the working classes of Paris. A better Representative of the working classes in this country could not be found than the hon. Gentleman; and therefore none was more fitting to make the appeal from nation to nation than the hon. Gentleman, in order to induce an international effort to overthrow the greatest curse of the present day—the militarism of all the countries in Europe. He (Mr. Illingworth) believed it was the duty of the Representatives of the people, and those who had some regard for the burdens that were to be put upon the shoulders of the people, to speak out at a moment like the present. They were all aware that in every direction there was severe commercial, industrial, and agricultural depression, and that few men could point out any substantial signs of improvement in the commercial horizon. If, then, the country was descending to a lower position of comfort, surely this was a time for the people's Representatives in the House of Commons to use every endeavour to curb the disposition which was shown in so many quarters to indulge in doubtful military enterprizes. From the outset he had deplored and voted against these enterprizes in Egypt. He thought that by what they had done in the Soudan they had been guilty of little short of crime, and he beseeched the Government to remember their pacific pledges, and not to be carried away by the fatal desire to overthrow

the Mahdi at Khartoum. If Her Majesty's Government would allow wiser counsels to prevail, it was his conviction they would be supported by the great majority of the people of the country.

MR. GORST said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) found fault with hon. Members sitting on the Opposition side of the House, because they had supported Her Majesty's Government in times of national difficulty. He (Mr. Gorst) felt bound to confess that speeches such as they had just heard received in silence by Her Majesty's Government, and not at once renounced and repudiated by them, rendered it extremely difficult for anyone on the Opposition side of the House who had the welfare of the nation at heart to continue to support the Executive Government. He was very much struck with what the hon. Member for Bradford said—he who knew his Leaders, he who knew those who sat on the Treasury Bench much better than he (Mr. Gorst) and his hon. Friends did. The hon. Member said he had every reason to expect that in the course of the coming summer the Government's present projects in the Soudan would be abandoned, and the policy of the Party sitting below the Gangway would be adopted. The hon. Member thought it would be so. He (Mr. Gorst) was afraid it might be so; but he could not help thinking of something that would happen before that change of policy on the part of the Government took place, of something which was likely to happen in the neighbourhood of Suakin within the next two or three weeks, and that was what was so glibly talked about in that House—the dispersion of Osman Digna's Forces. What was the meaning of the dispersion of Osman Digna's Forces? It meant that some thousands of poor Arab people, rightly struggling to be free, were to be slaughtered: that a number of homes were to be made desolate; and that, in addition to the evils that had already been inflicted upon that unhappy quarter of the globe, further slaughter and further devastation was to take place. Well, they might reconcile themselves to witnessing a horrible event of that kind brought about by their power, by their money, and promoted by their Government, if it was to lead to any satisfactory result for the benefit of mankind at large. But if that slaughter was to take place, and the result was to be that the policy of the Government was to be abandoned, and that nothing was to come of it; if neither they nor the persons against whom they made war were to be any the better, it really made one pause and doubt whether one ought, after all, to support the policy of Her Majesty's Government. He recognized to the full the great responsibility this country was undertaking that night. It was going to vote the men and the money for this Expedition to Suakin. He did not grudge the money, though, in the present distressed condition of the country, it was not pleasant to think that they were going to embark on an expenditure of many millions of money. But that was the smallest part of the consideration. They were going to sacrifice a great number of their soldiers and sailors, and of thousands of their enemies. He could not help asking himself and asking the Committee, what better should they be for it all a year or two hence? If he felt sure that the Government would persevere in a policy which they said they considered necessary for the welfare of this country and for the welfare of Egypt he would support them cheerfully; but when he heard one of their own supporters, one of their most cherished supporter, a man whom he believed was in their secrets and confidence, boldly announcing from his seat below the Gangway, amidst the cheers of the supporters of the Government, that they were going to change their policy, and when such a speech was received with silence by right hon. Gentlemen who sat upon the Treasury Bench, and when not one of them rose when the hon. Member sat down, for the purpose of denouncing and repudiating such a speech, he confessed it was enough to make those on the Opposition Benches pause before giving their votes to the Government. Another consideration which ought to make them pause was that this was not the first time that this state of things had been exhibited to the world. There was an Expedition to the Soudan last year. He believed that that Expedition was commenced when the Government had some settled purpose. He did not think so ill of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister as to believe he would have sent a

body of English troops to fight two bloody battles and come away without some result. He believed the right hon. Gentleman had a purpose, and he believed that purpose was abandoned in consequence of the pressure put upon him by hon. Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House. Having seen that done one year, he confessed he did not think they were unreasonable in having apprehensions that the same thing might be done again. He thought that, at the present moment, the Government had no business to halt between two opinions; they ought either to make up their minds to pursue the policy already announced to the House in the debate on the Vote of Censure in such strong terms by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War the Marquess of Hartington—they ought either to make up their minds to follow that policy out to the end and tell the House of Commons and the country so, or they ought at once to agree with the hon. Member for Bradford Mr Illingworth. It might be that they might lose some small amount of *prestige*, it might be that they might have a good deal of ridicule to encounter at the hands of foreign nations; but rather let them do that now than change their minds after they had slaughtered a few thousands more of Arabs. The hon Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth said, and said truly, that their relations with foreign countries were strained. No doubt their relations with Russia were so strained that it would be almost unpatriotic to say a word upon the subject in that House at the present moment. Their relations with Germany were very strained; but he did not hesitate to speak about their relations with that country, because he believed it was absolutely impossible for the most reckless Minister in the world to cause a war, or even a serious quarrel, between this country and Germany. He thought that was the opinion of Prince Bismarck, that however the Rulers of the two countries might grumble at each other, the two nations would insist upon peace being observed. Surely, when their relations were strained with all Foreign Powers, when they had this great difficulty of the Soudan upon their shoulders, the Government ought to have one single set purpose and one single determined mind, and they had no right to call upon Members who sat upon the Opposition side of the House for their assistance and support, unless they meant honestly and fairly to carry out the policy they had announced.

MR. SLAGG said, the Prime Minister had assured the Committee that the Vote which had just been passed had no necessary relation with the operations in the Soudan. As a matter of fact, it might very well appear that there were reasons at the present time which made it prudent for Her Majesty's Government, and those who sat behind Ministers, to be prepared in every reasonable way for military operations whenever and wherever they might happen to be necessary. On that ground he had supported the last Vote. The Vote now under consideration, however, related to the railway between Suakin and Berber. There could be no ambiguity about the objects of that railway; its construction related to one thing and one thing only, and that was the prosecution, in some form or other, of military operations in the neighbourhood of Khartoum. Against those operations, in any degree, he must record his most emphatic protest. He objected to them on grounds of humanity; he objected to them on grounds of policy. The construction of the railway he regarded, indeed, as an absolute impossibility. It was not necessary that one should pause at this moment to inquire what was the exact policy of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the present operations. He was not concerned to know whether it was the object of the Government to smash the Mahdi, to square the Mahdi when smashed, or to do any other thing which had been described to the House in the somewhat divergent speeches of right hon Gentlemen on the Front Bench. He had recently paid a visit to Egypt, and although he should hardly presume, on the strength of a very short residence in the country, to pose as an authority on Egyptian questions, he thought it might be admitted that one gained by a short sojourn in Egypt a somewhat more vivid impression as to the state of affairs than could possibly be obtained by a perusal of the Blue Books, and still less of the speeches delivered in that House. While in Egypt he formed one strong impression, and it was supported by authority which, if he could only give the names, would be

admitted by Members of the Committee to be absolutely undeniable. That impression was that the proposed railway was a practical impossibility. He had also formed the opinion that any military operations in the Soudan were destined to failure, for the one sole and simple reason that the climate in that region forbade any hope of success. He knew brave men at Cairo at the present moment who had been ordered to go to the Soudan, men who never flinched at the call of duty, but who were appalled at the prospect of the horrors and miseries which were in store for them and all those who were ordered by Her Majesty's Government to go to the Soudan at this season. He had reviewed with competent authorities the dangers and probabilities of the situation; and he was assured that no British troops could hope to cope successfully with the climate, either now or under the circumstances of a permanent occupation. To bring troops from India to fight the Mahdi would be a measure fraught with very grave consequences To attempt to fight battles there by the assistance of Black troops from the West Indies was clearly out of the question, because he was assured by good authorities that they did not possess the qualities needed for that sort of warfare, and the Committee knew from recent events how little confidence could be placed in the Egyptian Army. That being the case, it seemed to him little short of madness to continue military operations in the Soudan. But as to the railway, he believed that that railway could not be made in face of the hostility of the Native Tribes. Members of the Committee knew the geographical and physical difficulties of the country; but perhaps they did not all remember the fact that the tribes who inhabited the country through which the proposed railway was to go were very largely interested in the carrying trade between Khartoum and the sea coast. For that reason alone the tribes would present the most strenuous opposition to a scheme which would doom to destruction their greatest industry. He believed there were insuperable difficulties in the way of that project, and he certainly hoped that Her Majesty's Government would abandon the idea. He had no doubt that his hon. Friends on those Benches who, like himself, desired the commercial development of the Soudan, and who hoped that the country might at some time or other be thrown open to British commerce, did look favourably on the construction of a commercial railway from the fertile regions around Khartoum to the sea coast; but this was a purely military railway, and he was perfectly certain that it could not be made in the teeth of the enormous opposition which the tribes would bring against it. The only way they could make it was by pacific commercial arrangements; by convincing the inhabitants that their commercial and agricultural interests would be advanced by such a project, and by gaining their hearty co-operation and good will in the work. He knew that the great objection to the abandonment of—and yet he would like to abandon—all attempts at further military operations in the Soudan was that the Mahdi might thereby be encouraged to invade Egypt. He was willing to give his own personal testimony to the fact that the successes of the Mahdi had elicited abundant sympathy amongst the Mahommedan population at Cairo. But they must not lose sight of the fact that this was a religious as well as a political war, and that the fanatical inhabitants of Cairo were looking on to see whether the Mahdi was by his successes proving himself to be the true Prophet, and whether on account of his successes he ought to be religiously recognized or not. Naturally the sympathies of the Mahommedan people were with a Mahommedan Chief, even if he were a pretender, as against Christians; and he believed that the antipathy and fanaticism aroused by the Mahdi's successes was not directed against English people alone, but comprehended the Copts, the Germans, the French, and all other peoples of the Christian faith. But he asked how it was possible that a Chief like the Mahdi, with the military resources he commanded, could be a threatening power to the position of this country in Egypt? That this Mahdi was not a great military commander in the sense of possessing huge resources was a fact which must not be lost sight of. His military operations were necessarily of the most limited nature possible, and another point which he wanted to impress on the Committee was that his followers

were not the members of an Army in an ordinary sense; they were not the paid, organized, and enrolled elements of a systemized military arrangement, but members of tribes with families, homesteads with little portions of cultivated land which he was sure they would be loth to leave behind; which they only deserted for a brief period for the purpose of taking part in the neighbouring military operations, and which there was good reason to suppose they would not permanently desert and leave at the mercy of turbulent forces in their rear, with the object of undertaking the impossible task of crossing into Egypt. He thought they might calm their minds with regard to that apprehension. Surely the British power was sufficient to keep off any possible incursion of the Mahdi on the true Frontier of Egypt. That Frontier he should, with all deference, be disposed to place somewhere about Assouan, the defence of which was easy owing to natural conditions. He believed that it had been absolutely stated that there was no difficulty whatever in regard to Lord Wolseley's retirement by the Nile; that even at that moment his retreat by boats was quite a possible undertaking. He was not advising retreat; he did not pretend to suggest what the military course should be; but when it was said that these new operations were needed to provide means of escape for General Wolseley he was bound to say that he could not credit it. Another important point which appealed to him, as an Englishman and a man of honour, was the question of a proper solicitude for those friendly tribes which had stood by them in their need. But he was bound to confess that some of the declarations of Her Majesty's Ministers had been more perilous to those friendly tribes than any desertion of them could possibly be. He believed that if it had been understood by them that we were going to do one thing or the other, both the garrisons, some of whom were massacred, and those tribes to whom we were allied, would have made better provision for their own safety than they had made. He was convinced that the country had as much on hand in Egypt Proper as it could well manage without embarking on enormous and indefinite operations in the Soudan, a region so vast that their imaginations were taxed to grasp its full dimensions—a region full of horrors, full of diseases and disasters, an arid waste which had swallowed up many and many an Army already, and which awaited with its devouring jaws any Army they might have the unwisdom to send into it again.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, the question which I apprehend is immediately before the Committee is the propriety of passing a Vote which is to commit us to the establishment of a railway from Suakin to Berber, or, as the noble Marquess, I think, put it, towards Berber. But the speeches which have recently been delivered, especially the admirable speech of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), and that of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, raised the question beyond the mere detail of the construction of a railway, and rather compelled us to consider what ought to be our position in respect of the policy which Her Majesty's Government are now pursuing. We have within the last few days challenged the position of Her Majesty's Government and explained our views with regard to the errors we think they have committed, and have given our reasons for calling upon Parliament to express an opinion hostile to their management of affairs. Parliament has refused—or rather this House has refused—to respond to that appeal, and has determined to continue to place its confidence in Her Majesty's Government That being so, we are obliged to look at every question that arises from a point of view different, of course, from what we should have done if we had been able to rely on the support of the House of Commons for our policy. At the present time the Government are proceeding to take certain steps which are intended, in the first place, to relieve our Army, already committed deeply in Egypt; and, in the second place, I hope, to establish something in the nature of a firm and settled and orderly Government within the regions of the Soudan, towards which we have contracted very deep obligations. What is our connection with the Soudan? If the Committee will follow me they will see that it is really this. For various reasons which I need not pause to mention, we have a deep interest in the maintenance of a stable condition of affairs in Egypt Proper; from circumstances which I will not trouble the

Committee with, and with which they are familiar, we have secured a position in Egypt which gives us the power, and with that power the right, and even the duty, of advising Egypt with regard to various parts of her conduct and administration; and amongst those parts of her administration which gives the greatest anxiety, and upon which Her Majesty's Government some time ago thought it necessary to interpose rather vigorously, was the question of the relations between Egypt and the Soudan. The conclusion at which Her Majesty's Government arrived was ultimately to call upon the Egyptian Government to abandon the Soudan and to withdraw their garrisons. That was the counsel given, and which was expressed by our Representatives; and it was expressed with such force, and insisted upon with such pertinacity, that the Egyptian Government had to be changed, and we practically took the whole responsibility upon ourselves. Well, Sir, if we had left the matter at that time, the Egyptian Government, acting on our assurances, would no doubt, in some way or other, have accomplished that which we had ordered, or would have taken steps to accomplish it by the withdrawal of their garrisons in the Soudan; but, instead of that being left to the Egyptian Government to manage as they pleased, we committed ourselves to the mission of General Gordon, who went to Khartoum in the hope—and in the not altogether unfounded hope—that he might be able, by the exercise of his great influence, and by the knowledge he had of the country, and the character he had established among the people, that he might be able, in a peaceable manner, to accomplish the object of the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops, and establish something like order in the Soudan. When we go through the general features of General Gordon's mission, it seems to us that, on several occasions, Her Majesty's Government were not giving him all the support he desired, and that they had made his task all the more difficult by not carrying out the proposals which he made. But, whether it was so or not, it seems it was impossible for General Gordon to accomplish the object he had in view, unless some very different course were taken, and that it would be necessary for the Government to take some decided steps to enable him to retire from Khartoum, and to bring with him those who were to be brought away. Well, Sir, that led to the recent Expedition, with which we are cognizant—an Expedition which was undertaken under circumstances which did not reflect altogether high credit upon the discernment of Her Majesty's Government. I think they fell into their old error of acting reluctantly, and therefore with indecision, and without force. Her Majesty's Government says this will be a very cheap Expedition; but it seems to me that it will be one of the dearest Expeditions ever known. One of the most costly, in point of money, was the Abyssinian Expedition; but I venture to say that this Expedition is much more costly than that, for we have to take into account not only the money spent, but the blood to be shed; and if more money were spent on the Abyssinian Expedition than was consistent with the strictest details of economy, it had, at least, this result—that no blood was shed until the last moment, and then only a very small action took place, which completed the object of the Expedition. But the reluctance of Her Majesty's Government to put sufficient force into their military measures, their evident hesitation, explanations, apologies, excuses, and explaining away, which have accompanied everything they have done, have robbed their actions of a great deal of their moral force. If you act with hesitation and uncertainty at first, it requires greater force and violence in the end to accomplish your object. With regard to this particular proposal before us, we on this side of the House should, I think, feel the greatest reluctance to appear in any way unwilling to grant that which Her Majesty's Government tell us is necessary, in order to accomplish the ends which they have in view. It would be a disgrace to us if we were in any way to hold back from giving Supplies which may be necessary to disengage our gallant troops who have suffered so much; and we feel that nothing can be more unfortunate than that the Army of Lord Wolseley should be compelled to retreat after failing in its object altogether. We feel also that we should be guilty of a very grave crime towards those people in the Soudan, for whom my hon. and learned Friend the Member for

Chatham (Mr. Goschen) is so much concerned, if we were now to retire from the country, destroying our influence in Egypt; if we were to retire from the Soudan practically defeated, and leaving matters in a state of confusion, such as would result from our intention not having been carried out. With regard to the policy of the railway, as I understand it, it is looked upon as a question of a military character. I do not pretend to that military knowledge which would entitle me to speak of it from that point of view; but, looking at it as a political question, and regarding it upon general grounds, it appears to me that the railway gives the key to that which ought to be the true policy with regard to the Soudan. We cannot leave the Soudan altogether; we do not wish to hand it back to Egypt. On the other hand, we do not want to plunge our Forces into the heart of Africa; we have occupation for them elsewhere; but we do want to open the country, as we can do from our base in the Red Sea, and that will give us great advantage in any settlement we may be able to make with regard to the future government of the country. I do not say what would be the precise form of that settlement. But there would be a settlement. That some rulers could be found to undertake the administration of important points, such as Berber and Khartoum, appears to me to be unquestionable, if we only set about it in a proper spirit—if we set about it with the intention of impressing the people of the Soudan with our power and determination, and with a firm conviction that this is not with us a question of a year only, but a question of their permanent good, and of the permanent settlement of that part of the country. I believe it is open to us to accomplish it in this way; but we must have courage and firmness, and we must endeavour, as far as we can, to look at it unanimously here. But not only the language used by the Government, but even the language used by hon. Gentlemen who hold different views with regard to our duties in Egypt and the Soudan, is, I think, unfortunate. Such language, although I do not complain of hon. Members using language which represents their opinions, cannot but weaken our arms in dealing with this question. I cannot say that our feeling is one of confidence in, or satisfaction with, the Government; but believing that it is necessary for us, in the present state of affairs, to support the action they are taking, and especially with regard to this question of constructing a railway, we feel it our duty to support them on this occasion.

MR. WARTON said, he took the liberty of interposing for a few moments between the Committee and the division, in order to state what he thought had not been clearly brought out in the course of the debate. He pointed out that if after Tel-el-Kebir, when they had Egypt at their feet, when they had destroyed the Egyptian Army, when they were masters of the country, and had not incurred any peril with regard to other Powers—if their Ministers had been statesmen, they would have been able to take a correct view of the position and of their duty in connection with it. He said they ought then to have settled at once what parts of the Soudan were necessary and absolutely essential to Egypt; and that they ought then to have set about making the railway from Suakin to Berber. He hoped, although at the time in question the Government had no idea of their position, that they had a correct idea of it now. The Government, in his opinion, should clearly state their policy, and tell the House and the country what they really intended to do; if they did not make a clear statement, the country would, perhaps, find fault with the blood which might again be shed in vain; and it might be necessary for the Prime Minister to publish a new edition of *Lessons in Massacre*, with illustrations by the author.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 56; Noes 173: Majority 117.— Div. List, No. 44.)

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL desired to ask the Prime Minister what Her Majesty's Government intended to do in regard to the Indian Vote?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he hoped that after the two discussions which had taken place on those Votes the Committee might be inclined to discuss the Indian Motion at once.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, the Committee would be aware that he had a Motion on the Paper somewhat different to that which had just been passed;

and, supposing they were to go on with these Votes now, he should like to say a few words on the subject. He objected not only to the railway, but to the whole of these Votes in respect of the Soudan. He listened to one part of the noble Marquess's speech that evening with some satisfaction, for it gave them reason to believe that that Campaign had been conducted more cheaply, more satisfactorily, and more brilliantly than any other Campaign they had been engaged in. He only hoped that the noble Marquess would telegraph his speech to Lord Wolseley, so that that General might be induced to refrain from making any more speeches as to their determination of going on to Khartoum before that House was committed to such a step. It seemed to him, however, that what was said by the Surveyor General of the Ordnance (Mr. Brand) was a direct contradiction of that which had been stated by the Secretary of State for War. The noble Marquess had said that they were not committed to go to Khartoum; but the Surveyor General of Ordnance had declared that the object of the construction of the railway would be effected when Lord Wolseley had advanced to Berber. He thought the country ought to realize the enormous cost which those operations would involve; and, on that account, he could not allow the Vote to pass without a word of protest.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he could not make out if his hon. Friend was going to divide against the Vote or not. If he did not, he (Mr. Labouchere) would not divide the Committee, because it appeared to him that the Benches behind him constituted the most illogical side of the Committee. He had voted against the railway, but it struck him that he might not have been quite right in doing so. The railway was a military work, and if they were to go to Khartoum at all the railway might be desirable. For his part, he would have preferred to have voted against the whole Vote. He could not understand how hon. Members who strained at a gnat could swallow a camel. They had voted once against the Government on this subject; but it was too much to expect them to vote twice in the same evening against their Leaders, so he would content himself with protesting against this Vote, as he would against every shilling that was spent of the taxpayers' money for these operations in Egypt and the Soudan.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR believed that the necessity for the 3,000 men and their pay, which had been voted that evening, was really due to the maladministration of the War Office. He contended that if the present Government had followed out the plan of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, there would have been no necessity for the Votes that night. In 1881, speaking of War Office reform, the present Chancellor of the Exchequer said the arrangement which he then proposed to make would prevent the necessity of asking for further additions to the Army in the case of short wars. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

"According to the Establishments of the year 1880-1, there were:—Six battalions at home, consisting of 800 rank and file; 6 of 720; 6 of 640; 6 of 560; and 43 of 480, all with depôts of 80, except in the case of 8 brigades having both their battalions abroad, which had 280. In the Colonies there were 24 battalions, of which 15 had an establishment of 600 rank and file, and nine of 800. We propose that in future there shall be at home 12 battalions of 950 rank and file; 4 of 850; 4 of 650; 8 of 500; and 43 of 480. Eight of the battalions of 950, and four of those of 850, will have depôts of 150 rank and file, which will furnish drafts to the other battalion of the regiment; the remainder small depôts of 50. In the Mediterranean and the Colonies there will be 20 battalions, each of 800 rank and file. The 12 first regiments, containing, with their depôts, 1,100 rank and file each, and six of the Mediterranean regiments, containing 800 men each, and ready to be raised to 1,000 efficients from their home battalions, will, with three battalions of the Guards, six regiments of Cavalry, and 17 batteries of Horse and Field Artillery, be always in a state of preparedness; and next to the 12 home regiments will come four of 850 each, which could also promptly be raised to war strength. We shall thus, after these changes have been completed, be able at any moment, and on the shortest notice, to bring together and despatch a *corps d'armée*, consisting of 18 battalions of the Line, three of the Guards, six regiments of Cavalry, and 17 batteries of Artillery: and this without trenching on the four regiments of Infantry required for our annual reliefs, under a system which I will endeavour to explain to the House."—(3 *Hansard*, [259] 205-6.)

That was the plan which the right hon. Gentleman put forward in 1881; but in 1882 he again alluded to the subject, and he said this—

"First of all, I should like to explain what has been the result of that change which I proposed last year; and to which, I confess, I attach almost higher importance than to any

other change in our military arrangements—I mean what I proposed to do in order to meet, as far as we could, the want of preparedness for small wars about which so much has been said, and which, to a certain extent, must be admitted to have existed during previous years. It is quite true that when we had, in the August of the year in which we first took Office, very suddenly to send out a considerable force to India after the battle of Maiwand, and, again, when, in the early part of the following year, we had to send out a considerable force to South Africa, we succeeded in despatching both those bodies of men without incurring the remarks and the censures which had been made on former occasions, but I am bound to admit that we succeeded at the expense of a serious dislocation of our Roster, and that measure of success did not warrant me in abstaining from submitting to Parliament such changes as I thought should be effected in order that we might be always able to send to distant parts, if necessary, a sufficient force for one of these minor wars without the dislocation which we had experienced."

The right hon. Gentleman added this—

"And I proposed to effect this by adding nearly 3,000 men to the Infantry, by which means the regiments at the top of the Roster might be so strengthened as to give us always a complete Army Corps ready for service."—(3 *Hansard*, [267] 833-4.)

The right hon. Gentleman went on further to say—and these were the last words he would quote—

"I may say, also, that we have not neglected the other arrangements necessary for the despatch of an Army Corps in case of emergency—an Army Corps comprising not only Infantry and Cavalry, but Engineers, Artillery, Ammunition Reserves, Commissariat, and Siege Train. We are now in such a position that, if it were necessary to despatch abroad an Army Corps with all its equipment, it could be despatched as soon as the transports were prepared."—(*Ibid.*, 837.)

Well, the statements from which he had read extracts were made in perfectly good faith by the then War Minister (Mr. Childers); and if the right hon. Gentleman's system had been kept in view, of maintaining at the highest strength those battalions which were next on the Roster for foreign service, and of keeping the other battalions up to adequate strength in proportion to their position on the Roster, there would have been no necessity, in the event of 20,000 or 30,000 men being required, for such a Vote of men as had been passed that night. It was evident that there was a very great difference between the present administration of the War Office and the administration of three or four years ago, and that the change had not been made for the better.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

EAST INDIA EXPENSES (MILITARY EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN).

RESOLUTION. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [5th March],

"That, Her Majesty having directed a Military Expedition of Her Native forces charged upon the revenues of India to be despatched for service in the Soudan and Nubia, this House consents that the ordinary pay of such troops, as well as the ordinary charges of any vessels belonging to the Government of India that may be employed in the Expedition, which would have been charged upon the revenues of India if such troops or vessels had remained in that country or seas adjacent, shall continue to be so chargeable: Provided, that if it shall become necessary to replace the troops or vessels so withdrawn by other vessels or Native forces, the expense of raising, maintaining, and providing such vessels or forces shall be repaid out of any moneys which may be provided by Parliament for the purposes of the said Expedition."—(*Mr. J. K. Cross.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. J. K. CROSS: In rising to support the Resolution which I had the honour to move the other night, I must say that the discussions which have taken place in this House during the last few weeks, and the decision to support the policy of the Government at which the House has arrived, render it unnecessary for me to enter into the controversial question as to whether it is or is not desirable to send a Force to Suakin for the prosecution of military operations. This decision having been taken, we have to consider the means by which it may be carried out; and we ask the consent of Parliament to the despatch to the Soudan of a certain number of Her Majesty's Indian Native Troops for such time as they may be required, still keeping them on the Establishment of India. Hon. Members are, doubtless, aware that by the 55th section of the Act of 1858, for the better Government of India, it is necessary first to obtain the consent of Parliament before any portion of the Revenues of India can be even tem-

porarily advanced for the purpose we have in view. Perhaps it will be as well that I should read that section to the House. It is as follows:—

"Except for preventing or repelling actual invasion of Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, the Revenues of India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation, carried on beyond the external frontiers of such Possessions by Her Majesty's Forces charged upon such Revenues."

Now, I may remind the House that upon several occasions when it has been proposed to employ Native troops beyond the Frontier, and especially beyond the sea, various opinions have been expressed as to the exact construction to be put upon this section; but everybody who wishes to look straight at the law must come to the conclusion that it is necessary to appeal at once to Parliament to sanction the proposal. Hon. Members are aware that several Expeditions have taken place in which Indian troops have been employed; but one strange thing is that the division or apportionment of charge between India and England has not been made according to any definite rule. In the first China War of 1839-40 all the ordinary charges were borne by India, and all the extraordinary charges by this country; in the China War between 1856 and 1859 all the expenses were paid by England. In the Persian War of 1856 all the ordinary charges were paid by India, while the extraordinary charges were paid half by India and half by this country. In the Abyssinian War the ordinary charges were paid by India, and the extraordinary charges by England. In the Perak Expedition of 1875 all the ordinary charges were placed upon the Indian Government, and the extraordinary charges upon the Imperial Government. In the Malta Expedition of 1878, when a number of Indian troops were brought from Bombay to Malta, the whole expenses were borne by this country. Then we have the last Expedition undertaken in 1882, the Egyptian Expedition, where all the ordinary charges were borne by India, and 60 per cent of the extraordinary charges were also borne by India, while about 40 per cent were borne by this country. Hon. Gentlemen will notice the very considerable difference between the proportion of the charge borne by India and that borne by England. Let me just explain to the House what is the difference that is to be found between the ordinary and the extraordinary charges on the various occasions I have mentioned. The ordinary expenses of the Native Forces of the Indian Army, including everything that could be charged against them, such as superannuation charges, and all charges for pensions, &c., cannot be reckoned at more than £50 per man per annum, or just over £4 per man per month; but the charges in the Abyssinian Expedition we found came to £70 per man per month, and we found that the extraordinary expenses were about £60 per man per month. It therefore seems that the extraordinary charges on that occasion came to at least 15 or 16 times as much as the ordinary charges maintained in India. The same thing is observable in the extraordinary expenses of the Indian Contingent of the Egyptian Expedition in 1882, for they amounted to about £66 per man per month on the effective strength. I may be asked what precedent we intend to follow on this occasion? We may, on the one hand, be challenged to follow the precedent of 1882, or, on the other hand, we may be challenged to follow that of 1878; and I am bound to say that, if the circumstances were similar, we might take either the one precedent or the other. But, Sir, is the present case similar, either to that of 1882 or to that of 1878? In 1882 we were afraid of the closing of the Suez Canal. Our direct road to the East was supposed to be in danger, and the maintenance of the great waterway to the East was so important to India, that Indian troops were asked for to take part in the Expedition for its preservation, because it was held that India benefited immensely by the communication with Europe—more, indeed, than almost any country in the world, because the Channel cheapened everything that India had to buy in Europe, and gave her a distinct advantage in everything she had to sell in Europe, especially when compared with the position in which she would have been placed had there been no Canal, or if the Canal had been closed. My noble Friend (the Marquess of Hartington), who at the time held the Office of Secretary of State for India, then explained this matter by

showing that the proportion of the trade of India which was carried through the Suez Canal was, with England, 87½ per cent; with France, 88½ per cent; with Germany, 95 per cent; with Italy, 99 per cent, and so on; and that such an amount of trade could not have been carried on at all were it not for the Suez Canal. The Canal was therefore proved to be of vast importance to India—more important, indeed, to India than to almost any other country. Well, Sir, that is the precedent of 1882; but what is the precedent of 1878, when the whole charges, both ordinary and extraordinary, were borne by this country? I do not think that that is a parallel case to the one which is now to be considered, because in that case Indian troops were brought from Bombay to Europe as a demonstration against a European Power, and the charges were taken over by us, because those Indian troops were considered to be acting in English interests. The present Motion, therefore, does not stand on the same footing as that of 1878. It may be said, indeed, that the present Expedition arises out of our position in Egypt; but it does not directly come into connection with our present position in Egypt in the same way as in 1882, because India has not anything like the same financial interest in the present Expedition as she had in that of 1882. The present Expedition arises, to a considerable extent, out of the generous and philanthropic impulses of the people of this country, who could not bear to contemplate the possibility of what might happen to the Soudan garrisons, and who, therefore, determined to attempt their relief by military measures. While, Sir, on the one hand we cannot say that India has anything the same interest in the present Expedition that she had in the Expedition of 1882, yet, on the other hand, it must be allowed that she has a considerably greater interest in it than she had in the Expedition of 1878; for anything which occurs to disturb the equilibrium of the Mahommedan world, either in Eastern Africa or in Western Asia, or anything which affects the success of our arms in countries at no great distance from India, must much more affect India than anything which occurs in the Bosphorus or in the Balkan Peninsula. I do not wish to exaggerate the importance of what is going on in the Eastern Soudan, but I may put the question very plainly to any individual man of common sense, and simply ask this—will the knowledge that a barbarian military leader has baffled the efforts of Her Majesty's troops be an element of good or evil in India; and is it, in that sense, an Indian interest or not? So great an Indian interest does it appear to be, that some of the Native Princes of India—those who govern Hyderabad, Bhopal, Puttiala, and Jheond—have offered contingents to help the Forces of Her Majesty in the prosecution of this work; and I may say that I am very glad to have the opportunity of acknowledging as fully as I can on this occasion the loyal and generous offers of assistance which have been spontaneously made to us in this way. On behalf, not only of the Government, but on behalf, I hope, of Parliament, and on behalf also of the people of this country, I do wish to express the lively emotions of satisfaction which these loyal efforts have evoked. But, Sir, could we expect, unless these Native Princes of India did look upon this question to some extent as an Indian interest, that they would have sent or offered contingents in the generous manner that they have done? Well, Sir, as the Native Princes of India consider this an Indian interest, I do not think the House of Commons will refuse so to consider it. I do not wish to assess the exact monetary value to India which this Expedition ought to possess. I do not wish to say what exact proportion of advantage will accrue to India from it; but it will be clear to the House that India has at least as much interest in this Expedition as she had in that which went to the relief of the captives in Abyssinia in 1867-8, which is the precedent on which I ask the House to pass this Resolution. I notice that my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) has entered a protest against this proposition, and that he is supported by my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan). They both object to any portion of the expense of this Expedition falling directly or indirectly upon the Revenues of India. But I would point out to them that the sending of these troops will not increase the Indian Budget by one single rupee, for not one penny of the expenses of these troops will be borne by India, which

would not be borne by India if they stayed at home. I will say, also, that, should the operations of this war be prolonged, and should it become necessary to recruit additional men to take the places of those who are sent to Suakin, all those expenses will necessarily fall on this country, because we have arranged that they should, and a note has passed between the India Office and the Treasury in which it is specially stipulated that that shall be so.

An hon. MEMBER: And other expenses also?

MR. J. K. CROSS: Other expenses may fall on this country; but no more expenses can fall on India. The carriage of the men from and to India will necessarily fall on this country. The principle on which we act is a very simple one. India lends us 3,200 of her troops, and the use of four of her ships. She does not—as was well said by the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) when he proposed a similar Resolution to this for the Abyssinian Expedition in 1867—she does not wish to make money by the loan of her troops. Nor do I think India would wish to be placed in the position in which my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy would place her—she lends her troops to serve with their brethren in arms from distant Colonies and quarters of the Empire; but she does not lend them as mercenaries, hired out to the Mother Country, but free of charge, without any idea of benefiting financially by the loan. The reasons why Her Majesty's Government think it well to employ Indian troops are not obscure. In the first place, I may point out that Lord Wolseley has asked for these troops—for the service of three regiments of Infantry and one of Cavalry—and it is for the sending of those troops, thus asked for, that we ask the sanction of the House. I do not think there would be any difference of opinion among hon. Members as to the propriety of sending Indian troops to Suakin instead of depending entirely either on our own troops or on the Volunteers from the Colonies, much as we welcome the offer which the Colonies have made to us. When we consider the extremely trying nature of the climate of this part of the Soudan, and when we remember how difficult it is for Englishmen, accustomed to a generous diet of beef and beer, to bear up against the heat of the spring and summer sun, even when they have a plentiful supply of water, we must see how much better it is that some of our Indian fellow-subjects should be allowed to take part in these operations. They will be at home, and even at ease, on the exposed plains and in the stony defiles of the Soudan, where our men, however gallant they may be, would be absolutely prostrate. I do not for a moment mean to say that the work which these men will have to do will not be both difficult and dangerous. I do not attempt to disguise from myself, nor from the House, nor have I attempted to disguise from many people to whom I have spoken on the subject, the dangers which must necessarily be encountered by any of our troops who go to the Soudan, or the difficulties under which all these operations will have to be carried out. No one who has considered the water supply of the Soudan can fail to realize the great care which will have to be exercised to secure even a moderate supply of water for a considerable force; indeed, it is not too much to say that in these fights in which we may have to engage our hardest fight will be with nature, not with man. The duties of this Indian Force, which we hope the House will allow us to send in connection with the proposed railway, will be of no light nature. I presume that, until the military operations have been to a considerable extent concluded in the country through which the railway will have to run, all the working parties will require strong guards, both by day and by night; and the forming of these guards will be one of the most onerous duties which these troops can possibly have to perform. No more onerous work could be placed on any portion of Her Majesty's subjects. But some of these Indian troops that we propose to send now had the same duty to perform in the Pishin Valley in 1879, so that they are by no means unused to it. The country in which they will have to work, though much more desolate than any portion of India, is not altogether dissimilar: and the enemy they will have to encounter will not be unlike the mountain warriors they have met before. I do not know whether hon. Gentlemen recollect the battle which

was fought under Sir Donald Stewart, when between 3,000 and 4,000 of our Indian troops were encountered by from 10,000 to 14,000 of the enemy—a fanatic enemy, much the same in character as the enemy whom our troops will have to meet in the Soudan. For two hours the attack was hurled against our troops with almost irresistible force; but the enemy was repulsed by some of those troops whom we are now sending to the Soudan—who formed rallying squares, and delivered such a destructive fire as to stop the foe when apparently about to be overcome. These troops, then, are fully equal to the task they will have to perform, and they will do it well. I do not think I need say much more on this occasion; but I will simply state that the Force has already left Bombay, and, indeed, is now at Suakin; and it has been placed under the command of General Hudson, who has been selected by the Commander-in-Chief in India to take charge of this Indian Contingent. I am well aware that it would only be presumption in me to speak of the experience and capacity of that gallant officer; but I may point out that he began the Service many years ago, that he served in the Persian Expedition of 1856; after that he went through the Mutiny, was on the Staff with Havelock and Outram at Cawnpore, was at the relief of Lucknow, and was in the subsequent operations of the Mutiny. He was in the Abyssinian Expedition, and he had command of his regiment during the whole of the Afghan Campaign. I do not think we need despair of success attending the operations of that gallant officer. May I say one word in favour of the troops he will have in charge? They have done good service, and are all men of whom we may well be proud. The 17th Bengal and 28th Bombay Regiments were through the Afghan Campaign; the Madras Sappers, of whom there are 150, have performed severe and onerous duties in times gone by; and the 15th Sikh Regiment is the one which so gallantly withstood the enemy on the occasion I have spoken of at the battle of Ahmed Khel. The Cavalry Regiment is the 9th Bengal Cavalry. It may not be known by that name to the people of this country; but when I recall to mind that it was known in the Mutiny as the 1st Regiment of Hudson's Horse, it will at once be remembered how well they distinguished themselves. I do not think I need say any more. I would simply commend the Resolution to the House, and wish the men God speed in the work they have to do. I ask the House to pass the Resolution which I have already moved.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I desire to say a word with respect to the Resolution which has just been proposed by the Government; and it is simply to say that, speaking generally, I should approve of its terms as being, on the whole, and looking at all the circumstances of the case, a reasonable one. For my part, I am not going to be guided by precedents. I think if I were to argue the matter on the ground of precedents, and were to follow the hon. Gentleman through the precedents he has put forward, I could show that some of them are not altogether applicable to this case. I would rather argue the question on its own individual merits. So, also, I would not like to argue it on the ground of following the example of the Colonies. The Colonies, in my opinion, stand on a totally different footing. The Colonies have control of their own finances, and are offering us, voluntarily, the services of their troops, and voluntarily offering to pay their expenses. But in India we are the trustees of the finances. We control the finances. We decide whether or not the troops should be sent, and we ought to be most scrupulous as trustees about allowing one shilling to be spent which we do not think just, and reasonable, and beneficial to India. The question before us to-night is, what is the interest of India? So far as regards Egypt, the House has already decided—and, we think, quite reasonably decided—that the objects for which we went into Egypt are objects of interest to India. Those objects were, as I understand it, to secure a solid and permanent Government in Egypt, and also to secure our route to India. Now, we have introduced a further element—that of the Soudan. Well, the Soudan undoubtedly stands on a somewhat different footing, and I must say that the motives which the hon. Gentleman has urged for the Expedition to the Soudan appear to me to be altogether inadequate for the purposes of this Motion. For my part, I think he would find it rather difficult to

reconcile the objects he put forward to-night with those recently put forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Trevelyan), who said the Expedition was based only upon military reasons. But the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cross) says it was mainly forced on the Government by philanthropic motives. All I can say is that those who desire to practise philanthropy had better pay for it; and if this country is going merely to send this Expedition on philanthropic grounds, I should say this country ought to find the money necessary for the purpose. But I do not base it on that at all. I believe you cannot altogether separate the case of the Soudan from that of Egypt; and it is proved that unless we are able to secure the objects for which we have been contending in the Soudan we cannot permanently secure peace or tranquillity in Egypt. That alone appears to me to justify our asking India, as before, to assist us in this Expedition; to assist us so far as to provide from her surplus of troops certain Forces to aid us in this Expedition, but without any extra cost being entailed on India by so doing. That being so, I should like to conclude with one word of caution. It seems to me that although we may safely agree that the proposal of Her Majesty's Government is sound at the present time, and although we may carry it, as we carried a similar Resolution two years ago, we ought to bear this in mind—that if Her Majesty's Government were suddenly to adopt the policy—and I, for my part, do not feel at all sure that they may not adopt it—of abandoning Egypt, and giving up the idea of enabling us by means of Egypt to secure our road to India, then the circumstances would be altogether changed, and I should say that India had been induced to lend troops and spend money for no purpose whatever. The purpose for which India is now lending troops is to secure the objects I have mentioned; but if we abandon Egypt without attaining those objects, India will have been led into an expense which she ought not to have been put to; and I should say with the Prime Minister that it would be a swindle and a sham to call on India to find money for purposes in which she had no interest, and we ought to refund every shilling paid, or likely to be paid, for the purposes, whether of the past or of the present Expedition.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he thought that he personally had been rather hardly treated. The Under Secretary of State for India had induced him to give up an opposition to this Motion on the understanding that the discussion should be brought on at a convenient hour, and the subject fully debated. He (Sir George Campbell) did not think that a Motion made at 20 minutes past 12 o'clock was convenient. He objected to the Vote—though he admitted it was only a little one. Still, he objected on principle to the Vote; and as to the precedents which had been quoted, all he could say was that two blacks did not make a white. He was not altogether averse to a mutual support between the English and Indian Armies, provided it was upon equal terms; but what he did object to was that the terms upon which this mutual support was given were not equal. The Under Secretary of State for India had spoken in sarcastic terms of the possibility of India wishing to lend her troops in a mercenary way for pay; but this country had never hesitated to lend her troops to India for payment. In the very direst necessities of India this country had not scrupled to take the ordinary pay of her troops from India. In the terrible crisis of the Mutiny every regiment sent out to India had the whole of its ordinary pay transferred to India. It was not, then, acting on equal principles of mutual support if the Indian troops lent for Egyptian purposes were still to be paid for by India, while English troops lent to India had also to be paid for by India. In proposing this Motion Her Majesty's Government were not putting India and England upon equal terms. He would have viewed this matter in another light if the troops were only to be lent to assist in the retirement of the Forces from the Soudan; but he strongly objected to their being used in an aggressive war. Whenever a Jingo cry was raised in this country, and they had serious difficulties to meet, he was very much afraid that there was too great a disposition to say—"Oh, let us send for Indian troops; they will take us through all our difficulties." It seemed to him that the strength of their Indian Army was very much ex-

aggerated. It was not a large Army, and there was only a portion of it which was fit for foreign service. He doubted whether, under the present circumstances, they could spare any troops or camels, and other means of transport from India—it was quite possible they might soon be needed in another direction. He somewhat doubted the policy of employing Indian troops in the Soudan. It was all very well to parade Indian troops on great occasions and in times of prosperity; but the Soudan Campaign was beset with very great dangers. They were bound to take very great care how they employed Indian troops. Then he objected altogether on principle to applying any part of the Revenues of India to the expenses of this war, because he maintained that India had nothing whatever to do with it. He understood his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. Cross) to trot out again their old friend the Suez Canal; but, really, the Expedition to the Soudan had no connection whatever with the police of that waterway. No reason at all had been given why the expenses of the Expedition should be charged on the Revenues of India. He was alarmed by words which had been used by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington), and which were somewhat amplified by the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt), with regard to the interest India had in this war. The noble Marquess spoke of the war as if it were a religious war, and said they owed something to their Indian Empire; and asked what would be the consequences if the British Forces had to retire before hordes of Mahommedan fanatics? He (Sir George Campbell) protested against the introduction of the religious element. He believed that if the Mahommedans of India sympathized with the Mahdi there was no danger to the Indian Empire. But he did not believe the Mahommedans of India sympathized with the Mahdi. The great majority of the Mahommedans in India were the quietest and most peaceful of their subjects in India. Possibly a very small minority of that race would be found to sympathize with the Mahdi; but they would be so few in number that it was impossible they could give them any trouble. The Under Secretary (Mr. Cross) had referred to the spontaneous offers of assistance. Some of those offers came from States with which he (Sir George Campbell) had had a good deal to do; and he could testify to the loyalty of those States during the Mutiny, and to the assistance they had at all times rendered. But if the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary knew Indian habits and manners as well as he (Sir George Campbell) did, he would not for a moment believe that the offers to send troops to the Soudan were in the least degree prompted by any interest the States had in the war in the Soudan. The offers showed that the people were loyal and obedient subjects; but they did not show that the people took the slightest interest in the Soudan. He maintained that, as a matter of fact, they took no interest in the affairs of the Soudan. The vast majority of the Indian people did not know whether the Soudanese were Mahommedans or Pagans; and they would not have heard of the name of the Mahdi if they had not heard of it from us, through the English newspapers; it was only in that way that they had any knowledge at all of the Mahdi. He altogether denied the possibility of the operations of the Mahdi affecting the allegiance or disturbing the peace and quiet of the Natives of India, be they Mahommedans or anything else. It seemed to those who had been connected with India absurd to talk of the affairs of the Soudan affecting very much the minds of the Indian people, especially when it was borne in mind that much greater events had happened much nearer to them than the Soudan without affecting them. We had suffered great disasters at Cabul, and still the people of India were little affected. Even when a great part of India was given up to anarchy and our power in some districts was effaced, little effect was produced upon the people in the Provinces which were not subjected to the Mutiny; their allegiance was not in the least shaken. He thought that the Mutiny served to teach them an important lesson. The mutineers set up a Mahommedan King as the Representative of the Great Mogul; and who were their great allies in putting down the Mutiny? Why, the two Provinces in which Mahommedans were most numerous—namely, the Punjaub, where half the population were Mahommedans, and

Bengal, where a very large proportion of the people were Mahommedans. He read with great interest the article from the pen of Sir Richard Temple which was lately published in one of the Reviews. He was anxious to see whether the writer would say anything alarming; but, as a matter of fact, he had nothing alarming to tell them; and he went out to curse, and he blessed altogether. Sir Richard Temple made some allusion to the disaster at Cabul; but he (Sir George Campbell) failed to see what connection there was between that disaster and the Mutiny. Now, the House knew that the object of the Expedition to Suakin was to smash Osman Digna. He (Sir George Campbell) protested against the policy of smashing Osman Digna. Indeed, he cordially agreed with some of the remarks on that matter which were made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). He (Sir George Campbell) was one of those who by his vote expressed the opinion that the last Expedition under General Graham was one of the most unjustifiable acts of unreasonable slaughter which had ever been committed in the history of this country; and when the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) told the House that they had not committed themselves to go to Khartoum, then he asked — "Why were they going to smash Osman Digna?" He did not see any reason whatever for it. If the House and the country had decided to go to and hold Khartoum, he could understand that it might be necessary to smash Osman Digna on the way; but when the House were told in so many words by the noble Marquess that in passing the Votes asked for that night they were not committing themselves to go to Khartoum, it seemed they were liable to the imputation of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), that in smashing Osman Digna they were doing an unjustifiable act, causing, as they would do, the death of many thousands of innocent people without rhyme or reason. What possible justification could there be for the slaughter which would unquestionably take place if it so happened, as he believed it would, that this country would determine not to go to Khartoum? He said a little while ago something about the terrible effect of the Soudan climate upon European troops. He confessed he thought his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. Cross) had spoken with somewhat too light a heart of the Indian troops. The hon. Gentleman said the Indian troops would be entirely at their ease in the Soudan. It must be remembered that Indian troops were, after all, human beings, and that they could not exist without water. When it happened, as sometimes it did, that disease broke out amongst the troops, the Indians suffered even more than the Europeans. He could testify to the excellence of the Indian troops who had been sent to the Soudan. They were regiments for whom he had a great affection, and therefore he was very unwilling to see them exposed to the terrible climate of the Soudan unless there was sufficient cause and justification for the exposure. Indian troops would willingly shed their blood and expose themselves in a tough fight in the interest of the British Empire; but he did not think they ought to be called upon to do so in order that Her Majesty's Government might get at the Mahdi by first of all smashing Osman Digna. He would not detain the House longer. It was not his fault that this Motion had come on at so late an hour—at an hour when hon. Members were exhausted by a previous debate, and when the subject could not be sufficiently discussed. He was decidedly opposed to the Vote, and would vote against it.

MR. BUCHANAN said, the real question at issue was, were they, or were they not, endeavouring to relieve themselves at the expense of the Indian people of a charge which could fairly be held to devolve upon us? He had put an Amendment on the Paper—which, however, he should not be able to move—in which that issue was directly raised in those very words. He regretted particularly that he could not move it, for the words used were not his own words, but those of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War, in a despatch which he wrote on the 5th of October, 1882, as Indian Secretary to Lord Ripon's Government, on the subject of the expenses of the Indian Contingent sent to Egypt in that year. He

did not wish, especially at that hour of the night—12.45—to go into details respecting the Expedition to the Soudan. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. Cross) had given up any attempt to make out that this was an Indian Expedition or that it was an Expedition in any way connected with the interests of India. Therefore, he (Mr Buchanan) took it that the Expedition was undertaken for Imperial purposes; that the objects in view were exclusively Imperial. If for the purpose of bringing the Expedition to a speedy termination it was thought advisable to make use of Indian troops, they were justified in using them; but they ought certainly to pay the Indian Government for the aid so rendered. His remarks upon the Motion now before the House he should confine to one or two points which were raised by his hon. Friend (Mr. Cross). He should endeavour to point out that the Motion brought forward by the Government on that occasion was contrary to the spirit of the Act of 1858; then he should say a word or two with regard to the precedents relied upon, particularly those of the Abyssinian War and of the Perak Expedition. Now, with regard to the Act of 1858, his hon. Friend the Under Secretary (Mr. Cross) had read to the House Clause 55, in conformity with which the Motion had been brought forward by the Government The origin of that clause being inserted in the Act was well known. It was due to the initiative of the Prime Minister The original clause as inserted by Mr Gladstone was withdrawn in the Upper House; and the Earl of Derby, the Prime Minister of the time, substituted for it the present clause. In his speech of the 19th of July, 1858, the object of the clause was thus distinctly laid down The noble Earl said—

"The effect of the clause would be, that Indian troops, except for the purpose of preventing anticipated invasion, or of repelling actual invasion, should not quit their own territory; or if they did, the expense should be defrayed out of the revenues of this country, and not out of the revenues of India If the troops were employed out of India, it would be for Parliament to decide whether they were employed on Indian or Imperial objects The clause did not prevent the Crown from making use of the Indian troops, subject only to this—that as a general rule the expense of these troops must be defrayed by Parliament."—(3 *Hansard*, [151] 169.)

The Earl of Derby laid down the general rule that if the Home Government wished to employ Indian troops out of India it should defray the expenses of such employment out of Imperial funds; and therefore the House ought to ask themselves whether there was anything in the circumstances of the present case to justify a departure from this general rule? The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cross) alluded to the Expeditions to China, all of which took place, and were practically carried out, anterior to the Act of 1858 coming into force. In two of the three Expeditions to China the Imperial Government bore all the expenses, ordinary as well as extraordinary; in one the ordinary expenses were thrown on India. In fact, on no occasion on which Indian troops were employed outside of India after the passing of the Act had the Imperial Government given such good terms as they gave before the passing of the Act, except in the case of the conveyance of the Indian troops to Malta. Reference had been made by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cross) to the course pursued in the precedent of the Abyssinian War. It was, however, probably within the knowledge of hon. Members that the conclusion arrived at by the Government of the day to throw the ordinary expenses incurred during that war by the employment of Indian Forces upon the Indian Exchequer was not allowed to pass without grave question. The Motion proposed by the late Mr. Fawcett, whose loss, on an occasion like the present, was painfully realized, was supported by very distinguished Members of the House—by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) and by the present Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan); and outside of the House it was supported by very high Indian authorities—by, for instance, Sir John Lawrence, who was then Governor-General of India, and Sir William Muir. The Minutes that were recorded by these two distinguished civilians, together with the despatch of the Government of India of February 3, 1868, had unfortunately never been published. But Sir John Lawrence's opinion was also on record in a letter which he addressed to the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon

(Sir Stafford Northcote), at that time Secretary of State for India, and which had since been published in Lord Lawrence's life. He (Mr. Buchanan) desired to read an extract from that letter, because he believed the words of Sir John Lawrence, with regard to the Abyssinian Expedition, were applicable to the present Expedition to Suakin. Sir John Lawrence, on the 2nd of January, 1868, wrote—

"I hope you will forgive me when I say that I cannot go with you in what you advanced in the debate regarding the Abyssinian Expedition. I am sure that the general feeling in India, especially among the Natives, will be that it is unjust to charge India with the cost of the ordinary expenses of the troops. It seems to me that Lord Cranbourn effectively disposed of all the arguments in support of the measure."

Then Sir John Lawrence went on—

"I cannot admit that India has the slightest interest in the question at issue between England and King Theodore. We shall be neither stronger nor weaker out here if he is duly punished for his misdeeds. Abyssinia is too distant from India; the communications between the two countries are too slight for the people of India to take any interest in what goes on in the former part of the world."

Now, he (Mr. Buchanan) submitted to the House that if for King Theodore they substituted the Mahdi, and for Abyssinia they substituted the Soudan, Sir John Lawrence's words in 1868 were almost exactly applicable to the present occasion. In the Correspondence regarding the Abyssinian War Sir John Lawrence pointed out that if the proposal of the Home Government to place any of the expenses upon the Indian Government were accepted, it might set a very dangerous precedent for Indian finance hereafter. Sir John Lawrence's foresight had been amply justified. The precedent of the Abyssinian War was cited to justify what was done in the case of the Perak Expedition, and the two precedents were now brought forward as a justification of the present Motion. This was a matter which was of great importance to the future of Indian finance. The power of resistance possessed by the House of Commons was diminished on every occasion Motions of this kind were made; and there was a distinct danger that with frequent repetitions of precedents they would establish a principle which, once accepted, would operate unfairly to India, and prejudicially to England. It would operate unfairly to India, because of the many calls which might be made upon that country; and it would operate prejudicially to England, because India would come to be looked upon, as the Marquess of Salisbury, speaking on the 28th of November, 1867, in the debate on the subject of the Abyssinian War, feared it might be, as a

"Barrack in Oriental seas, from which we may draw any number of troops without paying for them."

It was alleged that, after all, this was a very small matter. It was said that they were only putting the ordinary expenses of the Expedition on the Indian Government, and it was asked—"What does it matter whether the Indian troops are paid in cantonments in India, or in huts in the Soudan?" In point of fact, there was an important principle at stake; and if they were to go on making precedents of this sort, they might do permanent damage to the interests of India in the House. He was delighted to hear from his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. Cross) the assurance that no extraordinary expenses whatever would be thrown upon the Indian Government. He noticed that in the case of the Abyssinian Expedition the India Office, when it was demanded that all the ordinary expenses of the Indian Contingent should be put on the Indian Government, entered into an arrangement that all extra allowances, pensions, or gratuities to officers or soldiers, and pensions to the families of killed or disabled men, should come out of the Imperial Exchequer. He should like to know whether similar terms had been made with the Indian Government on the present occasion? There was still another point on which he was somewhat doubtful—namely, as to India being surcharged under the present arrangement. He put a Question the other day to his hon. Friend (Mr. Cross) with regard to the purchase of some camels to be used for transport purposes in the Soudan. The hon. Gentleman replied that camels were being bought in India, and all the expenses of purchase, shipment, &c. would ultimately fall on the Imperial Exchequer. Knowing what the experience of India in the past was, the use of the word "ultimately" caused him some anxiety. In the cases of the Abyssinian and Perak Expeditions India was to pay only ordinary expenses;

but she had to advance the money for all the expenses of the Expeditions, and in the repayment there was a delay which would be incredible if it were not recorded by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary (Mr. Cross) himself. In a letter which he wrote to the Secretary to the Treasury in March, 1883, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cross) said—

"In the instance of the Perak Expedition which occurred in 1875-6, no repayment of the sums advanced by the Government of India was made until May, 1881, and the account was not formally adjusted until June, 1882. In the case of the Afghan War, the sum granted by the British Government towards the expenses of the Expedition is being spread over six years, and in that of the Abyssinian Expedition, where in order to make the necessary advances the Government of India were themselves obliged to borrow, the accounts were not formally closed for more than 12 years after the operations were undertaken."

It did seem to him that if payments from this country to the Indian Exchequer were delayed for so long a period there was a decided loss to India. The Indian people must indeed be surprised to see the difference between the treatment served out by England to India and that which England demanded from India to her. It was not creditable to us that when there was a debt due to England it was exacted with promptitude, and even interest was demanded; but that when there was a debt from England to India payment was long deferred, and not one half-penny of interest was ever paid. Under the circumstances he thought that a Parliamentary Inquiry would be useful into the way in which Indian finance and administration were affected by the delays and difficulties caused by the Offices at home, particularly of the Treasury and War Office. He trusted that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cross) would provide, by getting advances from the Treasury or otherwise, that India should not be out of pocket by the obligation laid upon her of defraying in advance the whole of the expenses connected with the despatch of her Contingent. They heard mention made from time to time of the duty of the House of Commons to India. What that duty was it was often difficult to define; but in this case the duty was laid upon them by Act of Parliament, and the question they had to ask themselves was this—"Are we to discharge that duty fearlessly and unselfishly?" Naturally they had to look first for the due discharge of that duty to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on the two Front Benches. Their hands had, however, been weakened by what they themselves had done; the hands of those on the Front Opposition Bench by what the late Conservative Government had proposed with regard to the Afghan War; the hands of the Front Bench on that side by their original proposals with regard to the Indian Contingent sent to Egypt in 1882, which were so unfair and so unwarrantable that they had ultimately to recede from them. It devolved, therefore, on independent Members of the House on both sides to do what they could to protect the interests of the unrepresented millions of India. Even though they could do no more than make a protest, it was right that without the strongest protest no new precedent should be established. If this Motion were carried, it would be almost impossible in the future to resist any proposal for the employment of Indian troops in countries East of the Suez Canal, and of throwing at least all the ordinary expenses on the Indian Exchequer. In that event, the object of those who inserted Clause 55 in the Act of 1858 would have failed. The House would be forced to the humiliating confession that the Indian taxpayer was better protected when he had to look to the selfish interests of the shareholders in the East India Company, than when he depended upon the guarantee of an Act of Parliament, the responsibility for the due execution of which rested with the House of Commons. In conclusion, putting the matter shortly and on other grounds, what the Imperial Government had done was this. They had called upon their Indian troops to help them, and to do them a service at Suakin; and right well, he doubted not, they would perform it. In private life, if a man did to another a service at his request, the least the person benefited could do was to relieve his family of all expense entailed upon him. What, therefore, would be mean in an individual could not be honourable in a nation and they ought not to make a demand from a subject race that they would not dare to make from one that was free.

MR R N FOWLER said, although he did not agree with the arguments of

hon. Members on the other side of the House, he quite agreed with the conclusion they had arrived at with regard to this question. He had always looked at any attempt to tax the people of India with great jealousy. They were a poor people and were not represented in that House, and the House ought, therefore, to be very careful in putting any taxation upon them. He agreed with the action of Her Majesty's Government in sending Indian troops to the Soudan, because, if the war was to go on, a sufficient number of troops should be sent there. He should have been glad if they had sent 10,000 men instead of 3,000. But it seemed to him that when they employed Indian troops it was doing no more than their duty to pay for them. Certainly, in this case, they ought to look to the interests of the people of India, and if the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) went to a division he should vote with him.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he thought the taxpayers of this country ought also to be considered, and that it was only just that the people of India should pay some portion of the money for several reasons. First, because the military operations were not without benefit to the Indian Force, because they got military training in the field which was extremely useful to the Indian Army; secondly, because the money paid to the troops and for their equipment would fructify in India; and the third reason was that the cost of these troops would be very great, because the Home Government would not be able to control the Indian expenditure upon them. These troops would land at Suakin under entirely different conditions as compared with English troops. They would land with bheesties to carry water and other followers—five or six times as many as there would be in the case of English troops. He would not deal with the argument that it was mainly on account of India that they were in Egypt and the Soudan, but would rest his contention on the reasons he had given, which, he said, ought to be taken into account in deciding this question. The camp followers when in India could be paid for cheaply enough; but when once these requirements had to be provided for Indian troops across the sea, they became most expensive. The Paymasters and Controllers would have no means of checking the accounts, and, that being so, the expenditure would be on an extravagant scale. But if some of the expenses were charged on India, the accounts would be properly checked and the cost kept down. For these reasons, he thought this proposed charge on the Revenues of India was perfectly fair.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR reminded the House that although the Government of this country, prior to the first War in China, made it a condition that the entire cost of the troops sent from India should be paid for by England, the matter ended, after a discussion which lasted many years, by the English people not paying a fraction of the ordinary pay of the troops, though money paid by China under the Treaty of Nankin more than covered the war expenditure of the first China Expedition. He thought that whatever expense might be incurred with regard to sending Indian troops to Egypt and the Soudan, it should not be paid for by the Indian Government. The example of the Abyssinian War, as well as that of the first China War, should be borne in mind—the first China War was carried on during the first Afghan War. For that war about 90,000 Native troops were added to the Indian Army, and the European Force was also increased, yet England employed 12 Native regiments and 4 European regiments, besides a large force of Artillery and Sappers, without payment of the pay and allowances, which India paid. In the Abyssinian War, though India raised 10,000 European and Native troops, to replace the 10,000 European and Native troops sent to Abyssinia, yet no portion of the pay of the extra troops was made good to India. This treatment was in great contrast with that of India to England. In the last Afghan War five battalions of Infantry extra to the 50 permanently stationed in India were sent out, and immediately on embarking all charge was borne by India.

MR. ONSLOW said, he did not think the Government had taken a proper course in bringing forward the Resolution so late in the evening. The question was one in which many hon. Gentlemen in that House, and very many persons outside it, took a great interest, and, if he remembered rightly, the Government had pledged themselves to

bring it forward at 11 o'clock, at the commencement of Business; but it was 12 o'clock before it was reached. The hon. Gentleman who brought forward the Motion had said that there was some analogy between the sending of troops to Suakin and sending them to Abyssinia; but he would remind the hon. Gentleman that the war in Abyssinia was a very popular war, and on both sides of the House it was agreed that something should be done to rescue their fellow-subjects in that country. But there was a great difference of opinion in the House and out of it as to whether this war was necessary or not, and therefore he thought there was very little analogy in the two cases. He had not voted for the payment of £500,000 by India for the troops employed at Tel-el-Kebir, because he held that India had nothing to do with that war; but he should support the present Resolution, as India was only asked to pay the ordinary pay of the troops. The House should recollect that the Indian troops which were now being sent were not for the relief of General Gordon, but because they had had a great reverse in the death of General Gordon. If these troops which were to be sent to Suakin were merely for the purpose of guarding the railway, he did not think they would go back to India very well contented. They had the belief that they were to fight for the *prestige* of the Empire, and for the purpose of the "smashing up" of the Mahdi; but if they were to be sent on a sort of picnic only, he did not think they would care very much to come forward again to fight the battles of the British Empire. The hon. Gentleman had laid some stress on the loyalty of the Chiefs in India, and he (Mr. Onslow) thought it ought to be a matter for great congratulation amongst the English people that these Chiefs had come forward to lend their troops as they had done in the Afghan War. The Native troops who were going to Suakin did not really think much of the Mahdi. It had been stated that it was a dangerous thing to send Mahommedan troops to fight Mahommedans in the Soudan; but he did not believe there was any ground for apprehension in that respect. He believed the Native troops were thoroughly loyal to the Empress of India, and that they were ready to show their loyalty in the same manner as they had done before. In his opinion, if they were called upon to fight in the interest of the Empire, they would not care against what foe they fought. He hoped they would not be sent to Suakin merely for the protection of the railway. The hon. Gentleman had remarked that the troops would be somewhat in their element at Suakin; but he seemed to have forgotten that the accommodation they would have there would be very different from that which they were accustomed to in India. He would not speak on this subject any further than to say that he should give a consistent vote on this question in supporting Her Majesty's Government.

MR. SLAGG said, he rose to express regret that, according to unhappy precedent, Indian questions of great importance to that country should be pushed off to an hour when it was absolutely impossible that they could be adequately discussed. He desired to make a strong protest against and to express his distinct aversion not only to the terms of the Motion, but to the payment by India of any sum towards this service. The hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) based his approval of the payment by India of a proportion of the cost of the troops on the ground of the field practice which the Indian troops would get in the Soudan. That might be so; but he (Mr. Slagg) altogether objected to their employment. The Contingent would not return to India in the same condition as they were in when they left. A great many of them would leave their bones on the sands of the Soudan; and to take men to be shot in a country and for a cause in which they had no interest in the world was an arrangement which he could not approve. He thought it would constitute a dangerous precedent, one which would be fraught with danger both to India and this country. He believed it could be shown that the Indian Mutiny arose in a great measure from Indian troops serving beyond India; and he would like to know who had guaged Native opinion on this subject, because experience showed that it was dangerous to employ their fellow-subjects in India in this way?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he had been asked a question as to the meaning of the words "ultimate charge" which his

hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State had used. The first incidence would be a local charge, and the word "ultimate," in this case, meant that the Indian Government would be repaid by us. Then he had been asked as to the time of payment. He was told that, although the accounts between the two Governments were not finally settled for some time, as a rule the balance outstanding was exceedingly small. The Government was asked whether they intended to tax the people of India in connection with this transaction. The Government intended to do nothing of the sort. Their intention was that India should neither gain nor lose one penny in this matter, and therefore no tax whatever would fall upon the people of India, who would stand in exactly the same position as now.

MR. CHEETHAM said, that when Indian troops were proposed to be employed a little more than two years ago out of India, there were strong protests on the part of the Indian Government and the Indian people. He should like to know whether, on the present occasion, any assurance could be given that the employment of Indian troops, on the terms proposed, had met with the entire concurrence of the authorities in India?

MR. J. K. CROSS said, Her Majesty's Government had received no protests whatever, and he thought that if any objections had been entertained in India to the proposed employment of Indian troops, Her Majesty's Government would have heard of them.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 88; Noes 23: Majority 65.—(Div. List, No. 45.)

Resolved, That, Her Majesty having directed a Military Expedition of Her Native forces charged upon the revenues of India to be despatched for service in the Soudan and Nubia, this House consents that the ordinary pay of such troops, as well as the ordinary charges of any vessels belonging to the Government of India that may be employed in the Expedition, which would have been charged upon the revenues of India if such troops or vessels had remained in that country or seaport, shall continue to be chargeable: Provided That if it shall be necessary to replace the troops or vessels so withdrawn by other vessels or Native forces, the expense of raising, maintaining, and providing such vessels or forces shall be repaid out of any moneys which may be provided by Parliament for the purposes of the said Expedition.—(*Mr. J. K. Cross.*)

The Chancellor of the Exchequer

BOARD OF WORKS (IRELAND) BILL.

(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Herbert Gladstone.*)

[BILL 52.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he wished to ask Her Majesty's Government, whether they would lay upon the Table of the House a Return showing which clauses of the Bill were a re-enactment of the existing law, and which clauses were new? The same observation would apply to the Land Improvement and Arterial Drainage (Ireland) Bill. Both of these measures were exceedingly long, and he had tried in vain to make out what was new and what was old; but, under the present circumstances, it was almost impossible to obtain that information. If the Return which he asked for was laid on the Table, showing the effect of the alterations, it would facilitate the work of hon. Members in connection with the Bill.

MR. HIBBERT thought there would be some difficulty in the way of complying with the hon. Member's request; but he promised to consider the matter, in order to see what could be done to meet the hon. Member's views.

Second Reading *deferred* till *Monday* next.

MUNICIPAL VOTERS (RELIEF) BILL.

(*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

[BILL 64.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he now brought forward an Amendment in fulfilment of an undertaking given when the Bill was last before the House, and its effect was to reduce the qualifying period from two years and eight months to one year. The alteration was in Clause 4.

MR. HEALY: Will the Bill be reprinted?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): No.

MR. HEALY suggested that when the Government came to consider the Registration Bill, they should assimilate

the dates of the two measures, substituting July for August.

Amendment *agreed to*.

Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday*.

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION BILL.—[BILL 25.]

(*Mr. Craig-Sellar, Mr. Darey, Mr. Raikes, Sir Lyon Playfair.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Adjourned Debate on Amendment on Second Reading [25th February].

SIR JOSEPH PEASE said, he wished, with the permission of the House, to insert an Amendment in the Question as it stood on the Paper.

MR. HEALY: What is the good of this?

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member's own Amendment acts as a block after half-past 12. He cannot, therefore, proceed with his proposal.

Adjourned Debate *further adjourned* till *Wednesday*.

SALMON FISHERIES (IRELAND) NOMINATION OF COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Select Committee on Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) do consist of Nineteen Members—Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND, Lord ARTHUR HILL, Mr FINDLATER, Mr. HEALY, Viscount CRICHTON, Colonel COLTHURST, Mr. SEXTON, Mr TOTTENHAM, Mr. MARJORIBANKS, Sir HERVEY BRUCE, Mr. LEAMY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. THOMAS THORNHILL, Mr CALLAN, Lord MARCH, Mr BURNPHRASERT, Mr HENRY, Colonel MILNE HOME, and Mr DRAKE:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records. Five to be the quorum."—(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

MR. SEXTON said, that this was a subject purely and exclusively Irish, and that he found when Committees dealing with general subjects, or with English or Scotch subjects, were proposed, it was very seldom that the name of an Irish Member appeared in connection with them Here, however, they had a Committee consisting of 19 Members, five of whom were either English or Scotch Gentlemen who could not in any way be interested in the subject of Irish Fisheries. There were two sections of Irish Members in the House—namely, the independent and nominal Home Rulers and the Nationalists, and he had to complain of undue representation having been given to the former section on the Committee. He contended that the Nationalist Members, looking at the interests they represented, were not in sufficient force on the Committee. It seemed to him that the Committee was most unfortunately composed—most unfairly and most injudiciously—and that no good result from its deliberations could be expected.

MR. HEALY declared that the Committee would have to decide a very heated controversy which prevailed in Ireland between persons interested in the lower water of salmon rivers and the persons interested in the upper waters. The people on the lower waters earned their living by fishing, and it was to their interest that as few salmon as possible should go up the rivers; whereas persons interested in the upper waters were anglers, and were, of course, desirous of having as many fish in the upper reaches as possible. He had examined the names of the Committee as set down on the Paper, and it seemed to him extremely unfortunate that the Committee should be loaded with the names of Gentlemen who had an interest in perpetuating the present laws in regard to salmon rivers. The action taken by the Committee of Selection on this occasion drew attention to the way in which Committees generally were appointed. It was, no doubt, a difficult task for the Government to pick out men to serve on Committees. He quite admitted that there was a difficulty in getting hon. Members to serve; but once the Whips had made their selection and the names were fixed upon, the House was muzzled. In this case it appeared to him that there would be a number of Gentlemen put upon the Committee whose interest it would be to prevent any change in the law being made—Gentlemen who would not be able to approach the subject with unbiased minds, and their action and evidence would tend to the perpetuation of the existing system. No doubt, it was desirable that the views of these Gentlemen should be expressed; but it seemed to him that it would be better to ascertain their views in evidence. Let them call witnesses, and, if necessary, drill evidence in that sense, but do not give them such excessive power on the Committee. He was convinced that this practice of putting

upon Committees such a number of interested persons would not make those bodies of the value which they might otherwise possess.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, his noble Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Richard Grosvenor) had, he thought, very fairly constituted the Committee. As the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Healy) had pointed out, the people living on the lower waters of the salmon rivers were interested in preventing salmon from going up those rivers, and if no measures were taken to check their operations, there would soon be an end to salmon altogether. The proprietors on the upper waters were surely quite as interested in this matter as the dwellers on the lower waters. The hon. Gentleman opposite asked what chance would there be of any alteration being made in the law when the Committee was composed in this way? The Committee might find that no alteration in the law was required, and that, on the contrary, the law should be made more strict. The question was a perfectly open one. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), however, did not desire to force any names on hon. Members. With regard to English and Scotch Members being appointed upon the Committee, the Gentlemen referred to were well versed in matters connected with fisheries, and their assistance could not but be valuable in the investigation of the subject. There was the hon. Member for Wenlock (Mr. A. Brown) and the hon. Member for Berwick (Mr. Marjoribanks), for instance, both being Gentlemen of considerable knowledge and experience in connection with salmon fishing. He did not think the hon. Gentleman could take reasonable objection to those Gentlemen being on the Committee.

MR. HEALY: Why did you fix the number of Members at 19?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We began with 15, and we found the Committee grew, as Committees always do grow, to 19.

MR. CALLAN said, the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) represented the interests of the upper proprietors in County Monaghan, and he (Mr. Callan) should have thought that he would have approved rather than objected to the upper proprietors being largely represented on the Committee. He (Mr. Callan) could not understand why, on an exclusively Irish Fishery Committee, they should have English engineers or Scotch Fishery proprietors. What earthly right had the hon. Member for Wenlock (Mr. A. Brown) in Irish salmon fisheries? When they could have the evidence of such Gentlemen as Mr. Bailey, who was well acquainted with the Irish Fisheries, they would have evidence sufficient before them without having to appeal for assistance to an ex-Cavalry officer, like the hon. Member for Wenlock (Mr. A. Brown). Then, again, what had the noble Earl (the Earl of March) to do with Irish Fisheries? The hon. Member for West Suffolk (Mr. T. Thornhill) was, no doubt, an excellent Whip; but he was an Englishman, and what did he know about Irish Fisheries? What interest, also, had the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) in Irish rivers? Probably he knew something about the Tay or some other Scotch rivers, but was he familiar with fishing in Ireland? He would be a good man to have on a Scotch Committee, but they did not want him on a Committee dealing with Irish matters. He (Mr. Callan) objected to having Englishmen on the Committee. He knew how they would vote. No doubt, the Solicitor General for Ireland would be the Chairman, and directly he brought forward a Motion he would be supported by those Gentlemen, irrespective of the interests of Ireland. The English and Scotch Representatives would vote exactly as the Government asked them, and, as a matter of fact, he would rather not have a Committee at all than have the infliction of half-a-dozen Englishmen and Scotchmen, who know nothing about the question to be considered, upon it, to the exclusion of Irish Whigs, nominal Home Rulers, and Nationalists. There was no one representing Limerick on the Committee, and yet no fisheries in Ireland were more important than the Shannon Fisheries at Killaloe, Castleconnel, and other places. Then they should have someone representing Derry and Tyrone. He would propose that the question should be adjourned, so that arrangements might be made for exchanging the names of those Gentlemen who were not interested in Ireland for those Members who knew something of the question.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that with reference to what the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Callan) had stated, he had always understood that, in striking Committees of this kind, it was desirable to put on them a certain number of Members who had an interest in the matter under discussion. On all Committees it was invariably the practice to nominate Gentlemen interested in the subject of inquiry, whilst, of course, on the other hand, Gentlemen were associated with them who had no such interest—Gentlemen who went into the subject for the first time, and were prepared to judge according to the evidence. The hon. Member (Mr. Callan) had spoken with some contempt of the hon. Member for Wenlock (Mr. Brown). [Mr. CALLAN: No, no.] Yes; the hon. Member spoke of him as a mere Cavalry officer; but he (the Chancellor of the Exchequer) must point out that his hon. Friend (Mr. Brown) was thoroughly conversant with the question of salmon fisheries.

MR. CALLAN said, he had simply stated that the hon. Member (Mr. Brown) was not an Irish Representative, and that he had no interest in the question to be inquired into by the Committee. He had said that all hon. Members from Ireland knew of this hon. Gentleman was that he was a Cavalry officer.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that the hon. Member spoken of had no special interest in this matter; but he had special information on the subject of fishing generally. So, again, had the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks), who would be a perfectly impartial Member of the Committee. He had no interest in Irish Fisheries, but was a specialist on the subject of fisheries, and, therefore, a very valuable person to deal with matters of this kind on a Committee. If they said that whenever there was an inquiry as to one part of the United Kingdom other parts of the United Kingdom were not to take part in it, they would be laying down a perfectly novel rule, and a rule which might be very strongly objected to by the Irish Members at some future time. The Committee consisted of 19 Members, and he was reminded that of that number 14 were from Ireland.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had entirely appreciated the grounds of the objection of the Irish Members. They objected to some of the Members, not because they had no interest in the questions to be referred to the Committee, but because they had too much interest in them. The strongest objection was that some of those Gentlemen had a direct personal interest in the matter of Irish Fisheries. The Solicitor General for Ireland had a direct personal pecuniary interest in the matter. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) also had an interest in the subject; but it was a very different thing to take an interest in a subject as representing a constituency, and taking an interest in it on distinctly personal grounds. Every hon. Member in the House represented some section of the country, but of the total number of 19 Members on the Committee there were four who had a direct pecuniary interest in Irish Fisheries. Therefore, he considered that the manner in which the Committee had been formed was little short of scandalous. An hon. Member beside him had reminded him that if the Standing Orders were adhered to—and he was sorry to say they were not except against the Irish Members—the votes of those four Gentlemen would be cancelled by any division which took place. So far as to the Irish Members on the Committee. Now as to the English Members. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer entirely misunderstood the objection which had been raised on this point. He Mr. T. P. O'Connor wished to ask a question. The right hon. Gentleman's defence for putting English Members on the Committee was that they were to take an impartial view of the subject under discussion; but what had been done in the case of the Railways and Canals Committee which had just been appointed? Why, there were 12 Members of that Committee, and of these just one was an Irish Member. No doubt, he was impartial on the subject; but unless they could get more than one impartial Irish Member to serve on that Inquiry, they ought not to put four or five impartial English or Scotch Members on the Fisheries Committee. The feeling on the Irish Benches was that the formation of the

Committee was calculated rather to impede than to forward the object in view, and the Irish Members regarded the fact as an obstruction to just and reasonable legislation. He did not propose, at that hour of the morning (2 A.M.), to take any hostile step; but at the same time, if he could, he should be ready to prevent the appointment of the Committee altogether.

MR. O'SHEA said, he was sorry that no Member who was interested in or who represented the counties of Limerick and Clare were to be nominated. Personally, he had no desire to serve on the Committee, though his mind was quite open on the subject of the law on the upper waters of the Shannon. He had constituents who were interested in both the upper and lower waters, and he was interested in another river in Ireland, facts which might make him an extremely objectionable Member of the Committee. Under all the circumstances of the case, however, he thought there ought to be upon the Committee an Irish Member who was thoroughly conversant in the salmon fisheries—such a Member, for instance, as his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan). If the hon. and gallant Gentleman were added to the Committee—[Colonel NOLAN: No, no.]—it was very possible hon. Gentlemen opposite would be satisfied. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had no personal interest in the fisheries; but he was thoroughly conversant with the fisheries of the Upper Shannon, and therefore he would prove a very advantageous addition to the Committee.

MR. KENNY said, that before this Select Committee was appointed, he and his hon. Friends would like to have a clearer understanding as to what the special functions of the Committee would be. Those functions were not at all defined. If the Committee were to inquire into the Bill which was before the House and had been before the House for some time, the Committee were very badly chosen. In the first place, the most important portion of the Irish Salmon Fisheries were almost entirely neglected—namely, the fisheries on the Lower Shannon. It was only natural that the conflicting interests of the men engaged on the lower portion and of those engaged on the higher portion of the river would be brought into question. Now, the only Gentleman who represented on the Committee the interests of the fishermen on the Lower Shannon was the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kerry (Mr. Blennerhassett). The hon. Member might be very well able to take charge of those interests; but it must be borne in mind that against the hon. Gentleman, supposing he did undertake to represent the fishing interests of the Lower Shannon, there were four or five Gentlemen who were interested in the fisheries of the Upper Shannon to be nominated. It was proposed to appoint as Members of the Committee several English Gentlemen. The custom of electing English Members upon Committees of this kind need not in itself be necessarily objectionable; but it seemed to him that in this particular instance their appointment was objectionable, because English Gentlemen who went across to Ireland to fish, as some of the English Members it was proposed to appoint did, went across to fish with the rod. English Gentlemen who went to Ireland to fish went with their minds biased against the lower river fisheries, and therefore it was that he objected to the appointment upon this Committee of any considerable number of English Members. Then, again, it was proposed to appoint upon the Committee Gentlemen who, it was well known to everybody in Ireland, had a distinct and direct pecuniary interest in the upper river fisheries. He was reminded by an hon. Friend that a block was put against the Bill by a Scotch Member who went across to Ireland every year to fish on the Upper Shannon, and that in deference to the wishes of that hon. Gentleman the Government put upon the Committee four or five English Members who, probably, were equally interested with him in the fisheries on the Upper Shannon. He (Mr. Kenny) noticed the names of Gentlemen whose interest in the question was so close that their minds were biased, and they were prevented from arriving at correct and proper conclusions. Furthermore, the Committee was unusually large; the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary said it grew imperceptibly. He hoped that if the right hon. Gentleman persisted in the appointment of the

Committee, he would take care to have the fisheries on the Lower Shannon properly safeguarded; that he would consent to have their interests taken into account and properly represented on the Committee, in view of the fact that the interests of the Higher Shannon anglers and sportsmen were guarded by four or five Gentleman who had direct concern in those interests.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it seemed to him that the lesson of this discussion was very easily learnt. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) said that when he made the selection, he was assisted by his noble Friend the Treasury Whip (Lord Richard Grosvenor). He (Mr. A. O'Connor) had no doubt that the noble Lord gave all the assistance he could in the best faith in the world; but he could not have the least idea of the quicksands of opposing interests. If he might make a suggestion, it would be that if a similar occasion presented itself in the future, the Chief Secretary, instead of going to the noble Lord, who had plenty of other things in connection with England and the Treasury Bench to occupy him, should go to those Irish Members who represented the interests which were affected by the provisions of the Bill. It was always an invidious and painful thing to have to make remarks about individual Members of the House. Whatever opinions men might have of each other, no one liked to get up and object to an individual name. It was a thing which anybody naturally shrunk from, and therefore he could understand the unwillingness with which his hon. Friends had approached this subject that night. He understood his hon. Friends did not wish to carry their opposition to anything like an extreme. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would take to heart the lesson he had learnt that night, and that he would, on similar occasions in future, take counsel with the Members from Ireland.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on Salmon Fisheries (Ireland) do consist of Sixteen Members – Mr. SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND, Lord ARTHUR HILL, Mr. FINDLATER, Mr. HEALY, Viscount CRANBROOK, Colonel COURTHOPE, and Mr. SEXTON nominated Members of the said Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. TOTTENHAM be one other Member of the said Committee."—(*Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

MR. HEALY said, that simply as a protest he should take a division against this name, although he did not wish to connect any particular name with the matter.

MR. SEXTON agreed with his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Healy) as to the necessity of taking a division. He added that if the Government persisted in appointing on the Committee Gentlemen who had a direct pecuniary interest in the fisheries of the Shannon, their action would probably result in great embarrassment, because if he and his hon. Friends found in the Committee that the interests of the fishermen on the Lower Shannon were defeated by the votes of certain Members, they would certainly bring the matter before the House, with the view of having the votes disallowed.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 40; Noes 16: Majority 24.—(Div. List, No. 46.)

Mr. MARJORIBANKS, Sir HERVEY BRUCE, Mr. LEAMY, Mr. BROWN, Mr. THOMAS THORNHILL, Mr. CALLAN, Lord MARCH, Mr. BLENNERHASSETT, Mr. HENRY, Colonel MILNE HOME, and Mr. DEASY *nominated* other Members of the said Committee.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Five be the quorum.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) CORWEN, &c. BILL.

On Motion of Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL, Bill to confirm certain Orders of the Local Government Board under the provisions of "The Divided Parishes and Poor Law Amendment Act, 1876," as amended and extended by "The Poor Law Act, 1879," relating to the parishes of Corwen, Doldennaen, Ewenny, Gwyddelwern, Llanfihangel-y-Pennant, Llangar, Llanharan, Llanilid, Mathern, Penmorfa, Saint Bride's Major, Saint Pierre and Runstone, and Ysgytty Ystwith, and to the township of Lower Gwennys, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL and Sir CHARLES DILKE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 86.]

LOCAL AUTHORITIES EXPENSES OF CONFERENCES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. LEAKE, Bill to provide for expenses incurred in relation to Conferences of

Local Authorities, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. LEAKE, Mr. ALGERNON EGERTON, Mr. AGNEW, and Mr. ARNOLD.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 88.]

HIGHWAYS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. ACLAND, Bill to amend the Law relating to Highways, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. ACLAND, Mr. ELTON, Viscount ERRINGTON, and Mr. CHEETHAM.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 89.]

RIVER THAMES BILL.—[BILL 71.]

(*Mr. Story-Maskelyne, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, Mr. Elton, Mr. Walter James, Mr. Sellar, Colonel Makins, Mr. Molloy.*)

SECOND READING. BILL WITHDRAWN.

Order for Second Reading on Thursday read, and *discharged*.

Bill *withdrawn*.

RIVER THAMES (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. STORY-MASKELYNE, Bill for the preservation of the River Thames above Teddington Lock for purposes of public recreation, and for regulating the pleasure traffic thereon, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. STORY-MASKELYNE, Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH, Mr. ELTON, Mr. WALTER JAMES, Mr. SELLAR, Colonel MAKINS, and Mr. MOLLOY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 90.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 10*th March*, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILL.—*Report*—Marriages Legalization and Marriages Validity * (30).

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE CAMEROONS—GERMAN OCCUPATION. QUESTION.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, seeing the noble Earl the Foreign Secretary in the House, I wish to ask him, Whether he can give the House any information with respect to the intelligence which has reached this country as to what has occurred on the West Coast of Africa at the Cameroons? I will not comment upon it further than to say that, looking to the great gravity of the case, I am sure the noble Earl will desire to give the House all the information he can.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I am not the least surprised at the noble Marquess putting this Question, of which he was good enough to give me private Notice this morning. I may take this opportunity of saying that it does not happen to be the case that I communicated any telegram on the subject, as has been stated, either to the noble Marquess or to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales yesterday. I have read the Reuter telegram. No confirmation of it has reached Her Majesty's Government, and none has been received at the German Embassy. In any case I may add that, whatever the facts may be as to the action of the civil authorities, not only upon principles of international comity, but from the spontaneous declaration of Prince Bismarck when a report arrived that a Protectorate of Samoa had been proclaimed, and from the fact that our negotiations with Germany on Colonial matters are at present on a very friendly footing. I feel convinced that this incident will lead to no disagreeable complications.

INDIA—THE BENGAL TENANCY BILL.—QUESTION.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS said, he desired to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for India a Question, of which he had given him private Notice, with reference to the Bengal Tenancy Bill now under discussion before the Council of the Viceroy. The measure was one which would practically extend to Bengal what was known as Irish legislation. [*Cries of* "Order!"] He did not say that it was so. What he wanted was to know the real character of the measure and its present position before the Council? [*Renewed cries of* "Order!"]

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY, rising to Order, said, he was quite ready to answer any Question on the subject, but the noble Earl was proceeding, without Notice, to discuss a most complicated and most difficult measure, and he must say he thought the noble Earl was out of Order.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, he thought that the course taken by the noble Earl (the Earl of Wemyss) in asking for information, without Notice, was a very usual one, whether the subject was complicated or not; but the

question of whether any answer was given depended very much on the knowledge possessed at the time by Members of the Government in the House.

Earl GRANVILLE contended that as this was a Question asked after giving private Notice, it would be out of Order to discuss it. If a Question was likely to lead to discussion, Notice should be placed on the Minutes, not for the benefit of the Government, but with the object of enabling noble Lords who took an interest in the subject to be present.

The Earl of WEMYSS gave Notice that he would ask the Question on Thursday next.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN —MILITARY CO-OPERATION OF THE COLONIES.—QUESTION.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN asked the noble Earl the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Whether it was the fact, as had been stated in some of the morning newspapers, that the Government had in some way, more or less direct, requested the postponement of the Motion of the noble Earl (the Earl of Wemyss) for an Address thanking Her Majesty for having accepted the offers of military service from the Colonies?

Earl GRANVILLE, in reply, said, that the Government had no objection to the Motion, and had not the slightest wish that any delay should take place in bringing it forward; but, unfortunately, the noble Earl who had given Notice of his intention to bring the subject before the House had lost his voice through a cold, and the Motion had accordingly been postponed at his own wish. He was glad to see that the noble Earl had recovered

The Earl of WEMYSS said, that the noble Earl had accurately stated the facts, and that the Motion had been postponed, at his own instance, from yesterday until Thursday

LAW AND JUSTICE—FREDERICK MARSHALL, A CRIMINAL LUNATIC

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

The Earl of MILLTOWN, in rising to call attention to the case of Frederick Marshall, who was committed for trial at the Central Criminal Court on a charge of wilful murder, and against whom a true bill was found by the Grand Jury for that offence, but who was removed from the jurisdiction of that Court before his trial and committed to Broadmoor Asylum as a criminal lunatic by a warrant purporting to be signed by the Secretary of State; and to ask whether there was any precedent for the adoption of such a course? and moved for a copy of the warrant means of which such removal was by effected, said, that it would be within their Lordships' recollection that a few weeks ago a very barbarous murder of a poor young girl had been committed at Woolwich, and that a man named Frederick Marshall, who had formerly been her sweetheart, had been charged with having committed the crime. After a preliminary investigation before the magistrate, the prisoner was committed for trial at the Central Criminal Court, charged with wilful murder, and in due course a true bill for that crime was found against him by the Grand Jury. So far, there was nothing to call for special remark in the case. But on the first day of the Central Court Sessions in February last, Mr. Montagu Williams, as representing the Treasury, made a most extraordinary, and, as far as he knew, an unprecedented, application to the learned Recorder, it being that the recognizances of those who had been bound over to appear at the trial should be enlarged *sine die*, on the ground that in consequence of the result of a private investigation into the state of the prisoner's mind conducted under the provisions of the Act which had been passed last year, the Home Secretary either had issued, or was about to issue, his warrant to remove the prisoner from the jurisdiction of the Court, with the view of his being removed to the Criminal Lunatic Asylum at Broadmoor. This application took both the learned Recorder and counsel for the prisoner by surprise, and the latter earnestly protested against the course pursued, on the ground that he had been instructed to defend the prisoner, and that if his instructions were correct he had a good defence upon the merits. The learned gentleman contended that the question of the sanity or the insanity of the prisoner ought to be determined in open Court, rather than an innocent man, as the prisoner was then in the sight of

the law, should be sent to herd with criminal lunatics for the rest of his life. The counsel for the prosecution said that however that might be the protest came too late, inasmuch as the warrant for his removal had been made out, and thereupon the learned Recorder felt himself bound to yield to the application. The next day Mr. Baron Huddleston went to the Central Criminal Court in order to try the more serious class of offences, and was extremely surprised when he found that the prisoner had been removed from his jurisdiction, and he made some very strong observations on the course that had been pursued. For his own part, he did not deny that the Home Secretary had acted strictly within his legal powers, and no doubt the Act which had been passed last year had conferred upon him the power which he had exercised. But the time the Act was being passed he, and he thought most of their Lordships, had been under the impression that this power of the Home Secretary was to be exercised after and not before judicial sentence had been passed upon the prisoner. There were two points of view from which this question might fairly be examined—namely, from that of the prisoner and from that of the public. In the first place, it was extremely hard upon a prisoner that he should be liable, upon a mere hole-and-corner inquiry, to be sent to a criminal lunatic asylum without having had an opportunity of establishing his innocence before a jury of his countrymen; and from the public point of view it was extremely dangerous that such a power should be conferred upon a Home Secretary. Take the case of a wealthy and influential person charged with the crime of wilful murder; such pressure might be brought to bear upon—he would not say a corrupt—but a weak Home Secretary which might induce him to exercise this power in favour of the prisoner, and seeing that the same Minister had also power under the same Act to grant an unconditional release of a criminal lunatic, the result would be that such a person might escape altogether having to pass through the ordeal of a trial. He could not imagine anything more dangerous than that such a power as this should be placed in the hands of any one man. It might be said that the Home Secretary could only act upon the certificate of properly qualified medical men; but a diversity of opinion existed in the Medical Profession upon the question of insanity. Although he had the highest respect for members of the Medical Profession, he felt bound to say, after having frequently heard them give their evidence in lunacy cases, that they appeared to be sometimes, to say the least of it, considerably biased in the evidence they gave; and, indeed, the late Sir Alexander Cockburn, in the celebrated case of Palmer, went so far as to speak of medical men being retained on the one side or on the other. He begged to move for a copy of the warrant under which the prisoner in this case had been removed.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copy of the warrant, purporting to be signed by the Secretary of State, by means of which Frederick Marshall was removed from the jurisdiction of the Central Criminal Court, before his trial on a charge of wilful murder, and committed to Broadmoor Asylum as a criminal lunatic."—(*The Earl of Milltown.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, that he did not understand the noble Earl to make any attack upon the conduct of the Home Secretary in this matter. The noble Earl complained of the state of the law under which the removal had been made; but the noble Earl forgot that the very object of the legislation of last year was to enable action to be taken with regard to a lunatic prisoner before as well as after trial. The 2nd section gave power to a Secretary of State, when a prisoner was certified to be insane in the manner prescribed, to order him to be removed to an asylum for criminal lunatics. The noble Earl's speech might very well have been made on the second reading of the Bill when it was before their Lordship's House, because it was a criticism of the provisions of the Act itself rather than of the manner in which the Secretary of State had used the powers conferred on him by the Act. No doubt, the power given was very grave and very serious; but that matter should have been, and indeed was, very fully discussed last year. There were ample precedents for the action of the Home Secretary. In reply

to the Question on the Paper, he had to say that the warrant was in legal form, and although originally there was a slight irregularity in the signature, this had since been corrected by the Home Secretary. The Government, under these circumstances, did not see any necessity to produce the warrant, and he was not prepared to promise any amendment of the law upon the subject. If the noble Earl thought the Act was unsatisfactory and ought to be amended, he had ample opportunities of introducing a Bill for the purpose.

Lord BRAMWELL said, the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Milltown) had brought forward a matter of great moment. He did not like to say the Home Secretary misinterpreted the Act of Parliament, because he was a lawyer, and he had good advice, and he was sure he would give great attention to any step he had taken. But either he had misinterpreted this law and assumed a power he had not got, or the law was one which ought not to be allowed to continue. It was not every kind of insanity which entitled a man to acquittal—or rather, which caused a man to be held to be not guilty. There was the case of a man, undoubtedly insane, who had murdered his wife by repeated doses of strychnine; but he was found guilty of murder and hanged, to the entire satisfaction of everybody. This man had been guilty of the utmost cruelty, and no one wished to save his life. It was, therefore, not every form of insanity which entitled a man to acquittal. A man must be insane in one of two senses—he must either not know the nature of the act he was doing, or be under some delusion—such as that, if the supposed facts were real, would justify the act otherwise criminal. What were the proceedings which took place in the case of persons supposed to be insane? The proper course was for the Judge to impanel a jury and try whether a person was so insane that he was not competent to plead. Even if the jury found him insane, then the Judge had the power to confine him during Her Majesty's pleasure. But if he was competent to plead, then he was tried for the alleged crime, and if he turned out to be insane, as before mentioned, then he was entitled to be acquitted on the ground of insanity. In the case of a man who could not plead, he would be sent to the asylum, not as a criminal lunatic, for he had not been adjudged a criminal lunatic—he was simply a man who could not plead. What were the facts here? This man Marshall was charged with an offence; the magistrates committed him for trial, but according to the interpretation put on the Act he had not been tried. He was sent away to some asylum for criminal lunatics, although he was not a criminal lunatic, and there he was to remain. He was not quite sure whether the Act said he was to be discharged ultimately or sent for trial. It seemed to him that this was a most unreasonable thing. No doubt, the medical men were quite right in saying that he was insane; but he had not been tried. As the noble Lord said, if he had been tried he might have been acquitted; but the medical men certified he was insane, and then the Home Secretary decided he should not be tried. Was it not much better that he should be tried and acquitted on the ground of insanity, or found guilty if not sufficiently insane? He thought the law ought to be altered if it was as the Home Secretary found it, and was compulsory. But he doubted if it was as the Home Secretary found it. The Act might be quoted as "an Act relating to Criminal Lunatics;" but Marshall was not a criminal lunatic. He thought their Lordships would see that the course adopted in this case was attended with a lot of mischief. The Act was either a bad Act or it had been misinterpreted, or if it only gave a power to the Home Secretary of which he might not avail himself, then it seemed a bad use had been made of it.

Lord FITZGERALD said, the words of the Act were "when a prisoner is certified," &c., and the word "prisoner" applied equally to the man charged with crime as to the person convicted of crime. "Criminal lunatics" would mean "persons charged with crime." For the purposes of the law this man was a criminal lunatic. The meaning of the order made in this case was that if the man remained insane he stayed in the prison, but if he recovered he was put upon his trial on the charge for which he was committed. He could not see any issue in this matter of the great importance represented. As he understood the

noble Earl, this prisoner had been confined at Broadmoor on the warrant of the Secretary of State made on being properly certified of his insanity. It appeared to him that the course taken by the Home Secretary had been in accordance with the true interpretation of the Statute.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he thought that it would be very inconvenient for arguments to take place in their Lordships' House as in a Court of Law upon the niceties of the construction of this or any other similar Act of Parliament. All he would say was that the Home Secretary and the Law Officers of the Crown had placed upon the Statute the construction which the noble and learned Lord who had last spoken thought was the right one, but with regard to which doubts had been expressed by another noble and learned Lord for whose opinion he had great respect. For his own part he did not see any reasonable ground for doubting that the action that had been taken, whether the law was a wise one or not, was in strict accordance with the law. The clause to which the noble and learned Lord (Lord Bramwell) had referred related to "a prisoner," and this person was beyond all doubt a prisoner in the natural sense of the word, because he was detained under the authority of the law in prison. He did not share the view of the noble and learned Lord as to the use of the words "criminal lunatic" in the Act. The words were strictly defined in the Act itself to mean, among others, any person detained in safe custody during Her Majesty's pleasure, after having been tried and acquitted, but as to whom a special verdict had been returned that he was insane; and also any person whom the Secretary of State had in pursuance of any Act of Parliament directed to be moved to an asylum or other place for the reception of insane persons, which was the very case in question. Bearing in mind that a prisoner was anyone detained in prison by lawful authority, the term "criminal lunatic" seemed to him applicable to any person dealt with by the Secretary of State under the Act. Nor was there anything so exceedingly unreasonable in detaining an untried prisoner as a criminal lunatic, when they considered that until a recent alteration of the law it was the constant practice to detain in criminal lunatic asylums persons who had been not convicted, but acquitted, on the ground of insanity. Nevertheless, considerations of reason, public policy, and good sense led to the conclusion that such a man was a lunatic of a class whom it was desirable to treat in a different manner from ordinary lunatics. The insanity contemplated by this Act was not insanity at the time of the alleged offence, but during the time that the lunatic was in prison. The question whether the law required amending he would not enter into, but would content himself with saying that it did not appear to him so unreasonable as the noble Earl seemed to think.

THE EARL OF MILLTOWN remarked, that the noble Earl representing the Home Office (the Earl of Dalhousie) had stated that there were plenty of precedents for the course taken in this case. That was a very fine way of getting out of the matter, but he should be glad if the noble Earl would give him one. He still maintained that there was no precedent for a prisoner charged with murder, and against whom a true bill had been found for that offence, being withdrawn from the jurisdiction of the Court before trial by such a process as had been adopted in this case. Up to the end of last Session persons under these circumstances would not necessarily be treated as criminal lunatics, but would simply be sent to hospitals for the insane. An untried prisoner was now liable to be treated as a criminal lunatic, and to be sent to a criminal lunatic asylum before trial. He could not help thinking that it was a very great slur on any man's character to be sent to Broadmoor without trial, and the stain would probably remain on him for the rest of his life. He did not deny that the Home Secretary had acted within his strict legal power; what he complained of was, that he had not exercised the discretion which was conferred on him by the Act, and that his interference was ill-advised and hardly Constitutional.

On question, *resolved* in the *negative*.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 10th March, 1885.

MINUTES.—Select Committees—Industries (Ireland), *appointed*. Public Petitions, Colonel Digby *dischd.*, Colonel Walrond *added*.
Supply—*considered in Committee*—*Resolutions* [March 9] *reported*.
Public Bill.—*Committee*—Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) *re-comm.* [49]—R.P. [*Second Night*].

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE—CONTINENTAL MAILS (YORKSHIRE).

Mr. BARRAN asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has succeeded in making arrangements to facilitate the transmission of mails between the Continent and Yorkshire, in accordance with the request of the important deputation which waited on him a short time since, representing all the manufacturing towns of the county?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I fully recognize the great importance to the manufacturers of Yorkshire of being enabled to reply to their Continental letters the same day that they receive them. I am happy to inform the hon. Member that I have concluded an arrangement with the Great Northern Railway Company for the establishment of fast day mail trains in both directions between London and Yorkshire. By this arrangement, which will come into operation on the 1st of July next, the Continental letters which now reach Leeds at 1.49 P.M. will arrive at 11.46 A.M., and the return post will be despatched at 2.50 P.M. instead of 1.10 P.M., thus giving at Leeds an interval for replies of about three hours. At Bradford the interval will be about two hours. Corresponding facilities will be afforded at Nottingham, Doncaster, Wakefield, Dewsbury, Batley, Shipley, Keighley, and Halifax.

Mr. SEXTON asked the right hon. Gentleman if he could state the result of his interview with the Chairman of the Midland Railway Company, Ireland?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I have seen the Chairman of the Company to-day, and have been negotiating with him. The demands made by the Company are such as I cannot accede to. I made an alternative offer, which I hope will be accepted.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—LETTERKENNY QUARTER SESSIONS.

Dr. KINNEAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If a Memorial from the Town Commissioners of Letterkenny was presented last August, praying that Quarter Sessions be held in Letterkenny four times a year; and, if a reply has been sent to the Memorial; if not, what is the cause of the delay?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A Memorial from the Town Commissioners of Letterkenny to the effect stated was received on the 4th September last, and between that time and the following November several other Memorials were received from various localities in Donegal containing proposals for alterations in the Quarter Sessions of the county. These Memorials were all referred to the County Court Judge, who, on the 21st November, furnished his observations thereon; and the matter was then laid before a Committee of the Privy Council. In the meantime the Judge, in October last, had, in pursuance of the Statute, fixed and published his Sessions for the present year. There was nothing, therefore, to be gained by a hurried decision, as any changes which the Privy Council might resolve upon could not come into effect this year. I understand their decision will shortly be made known to the parties interested.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES—THE WINTER ASSIZE AT MANCHESTER.

Mr. WEST asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Why, having regard to the Order in Council of the 26th of June, the Winter Assize at Manchester was held on 24th January; and, whether he will advise Her Majesty to amend or repeal that Order; or, if not, take measures to enforce it?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT replied, that he could not say that the Assize of the 24th of January was inconsistent with the Order in Council, because the Judges had a discretion in the matter; and he did not, therefore, see any reason to interfere.

Mr. WEST said, that on taking the Vote for the expenses of the Judges on

Circuit, he should call attention to the subject.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE INCOME TAX.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the extraordinary expenditure which must be incurred in this and immediately succeeding years, he will, in framing his financial propositions, while maintaining the principle of a gradual reduction of debt, consider the expediency of mitigating the pressure on the taxpayer, and will therefore limit the sum to be raised by direct and indirect taxation to a moiety or less of the extraordinary supplies required, and provide the residue by relaxing the operations for redemption of the National Debt?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): My right hon. Friend will perhaps permit me to reply to his Question by another. Did he ever during his 26 years of Parliamentary experience know a Chancellor of the Exchequer to give to Parliament in answer to Questions a portion of the Budget a month before the delivery of the Financial Statement? I am afraid that I can give him no information in reply to this Question.

MR. J. G. HUBBARD said, the right hon. Gentleman entirely misunderstood his object, which was not to ask him what he was going to propose, but to insure the consideration of the matter beforehand.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he would always consider anything proposed by his right hon. Friend; but he thought the Question was something more than a suggestion.

FISHERY PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—THE TARBERT PIER.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will obtain and lay upon the Table a Report from the county surveyor upon the present condition of the Tarbert piers, and the probable cost of putting them in good repair, together with a statement of the tolls received, the cost of collection, the salary, if any, paid to the harbour master, and the sums expended on the piers for each year of the last ten?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not aware that there is more than one pier at Tarbert, and it is vested in the Grand Jury of the county of Kerry, who are responsible for its maintenance. I do not gather that there would be any objection to the Return asked for by the hon. Member, if he will move for it in the usual way.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to include in the Return all the piers affected by the Shannon Navigation Bill?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is another and a larger Question, which I cannot answer now.

ARMY—ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT—THE MAXIM GUN.

MR. CARBUTT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that the Maxim Company have offered to send six guns to Egypt capable of firing 500 shots per minute automatically by utilizing the recoil, so that the gunner has only to direct the gun, and not to work it, as machine guns have hitherto been?

MR. BRAND: I have not received the offer referred to. Moreover, I am informed that the first service gun on this system has not yet been made.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES, IRELAND.

SIR ROBERT PEEL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state what is the nature and scope of the alterations which he mentioned to be in contemplation of the the Government with respect to the Queen's Colleges, Ireland?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I did not state that any definite alterations were in contemplation. A Commission has just reported on the Queen's Colleges, and the Government have not had time to come to a decision on the subject.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: How much longer will it take to have this Report printed?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is a matter entirely in the hands of the printer, and I have no power over it.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—GAMBLING CLUBS IN DUBLIN.

MR. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that clubs have

been recently formed in Dublin by men who have been convicted of cardsharping and for keeping gambling houses; and, if he is aware that gambling and drinking is carried on all night at those clubs; and, if so, if he will take any steps to put a stop to those places, which are drawing numbers of young men into habits of drinking and gambling?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that three clubs, duly registered under the Companies Act of 1862, have been recently established in Dublin. The police there have been very active in the suppression of private betting houses, and in the prevention of betting in the public thoroughfares and on licensed premises; and it seems probable that the establishment of the clubs I refer to is due to this fact. It is not intended to relax the vigilance of the police over this matter in consequence of the establishment of clubs, and any infringement of the law will at once be taken notice of; but so far nothing has come to the knowledge of the police that would justify a prosecution.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN: Were none of those persons convicted card-harpers?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I believe that some persons have been convicted under the Betting Act who are connected with these clubs.

Mr. O'KELLY: Will the right hon Gentleman take steps to have the licences of the clubs revoked?

Mr CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think there is any ground on which to withdraw the licences until a case is proved.

Mr. O'KELLY: Is it usual in Ireland to give licences to persons of this kind? [Order!]

[No reply.]

PARLIAMENTARY REGISTRATION — VOTERS' LISTS, DUBLIN.

Mr. GRAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Will he inquire whether the preparation of the Voters' Lists under the new Franchise Act will be entrusted in Dublin to the Acting Collector General and the collectors of rates; and, whether that staff is thus constituted: Dr. Kennedy, Acting Collector General, a Freemason and a Protestant; Collectors: — F. Buckley, Freemason and Protestant; H. Hughes, Protestant; W. Westerup, Freemason and Protestant; E. G. Cotter, Protestant; J. F. Crofton, Freemason and Protestant; H. Wilkinson, Protestant; R. Hendry, Protestant; H. Dowman, Protestant; and H. M'Intyre, Roman Catholic?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that the duty of preparing these voters' lists—which will subsequently be revised by the Revising Barristers—will, in Dublin, devolve on the Collector General. The Government have full confidence that the work will be done impartially. I have no knowledge of the religious belief of the members of the staff of the Collector General's Department.

PREVENTION OF CRIME (IRELAND) ACT, 1882—SEARCHES, &c.

Mr. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that about two o'clock on the morning of 20th February, a body of police knocked up the inmates of Mr. Edward Hussey's house at Ballygrae, county Kerry, and without producing a warrant searched the premises; whether similar nocturnal searches were made in the houses of Maurice Quinlan, Farran; Michael Coffey, Dysart; Henry Williams, and John Harrington, Castleisland; whether anything was discovered to warrant these proceedings; whether midnight searches of the same character are frequently made in the houses of the same persons without result; and, whether instructions will be given to forbid this practice?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The houses of the parties mentioned in the Question, and several others, were visited by the police on the night in question. The police had reason to suppose that a serious outrage had been committed in the locality; and the object of their visits was to see that certain individuals were not absent from their homes, or, if they should be, to ascertain their whereabouts. No search was made of any of the premises, and, therefore, no warrant was necessary. Several similar visits are only made when any serious outrage is reported; and it is then the duty of the police, in the exercise of their discretion, to take all proper measures to detect the offenders.

Mr. O'BRIEN: Is it a fact that the visits have been repeatedly made to the houses of the same persons?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The same persons are often suspected.

MR. O'BRIEN: Well, are the police to be allowed to invade men's houses and subject them to innuendos of this kind without showing one particle of legal justification?

MR. HEALY: Is the serious outrage referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the half-killing of two men by a policeman discharging his gun accidentally?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: There is a further Question on that subject on the Paper.

NAVY — ORDNANCE, &c. — EXPERIMENTS WITH SHELLS.

CAPTAIN PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Admiralty have been furnished with a Report of the results of experiments recently carried out at Eastney Fort, Southsea, with a view to ascertaining the effect of shells exploding on armoured decks of ships; whether he would inform the House of the result of those experiments; and, whether he has any objection to lay the Report upon the Table of the House?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The latest trials took place in December, 1883. If these are the trials to which the hon. and gallant Member refers there will be no objection to make the results public.

ARMY — ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT — PURCHASE OF CARTRIDGES.

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that a large contract for the supply of cartridges has been placed by Her Majesty's Government in America; and, if so, whether, before placing this important piece of national business at the disposal of foreign manufacturers, Her Majesty's Government submitted it to the competition of British traders, due regard being had to their prior claims, and to the pressing necessities of large groups of unemployed artizans, whose subsistence entirely depends upon orders reaching their employers?

MR. SAMPSON LLOYD asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the statement in the newspapers is true, that Her Majesty's Government have given an order for the purchase of fifty million cartridges to an American manufacturing firm; and, if the statement is true, whether, inasmuch as there are manufactories at Birmingham capable of executing such an order efficiently, he will state why, at a time when there is so great want of employment to working men and women in and near Birmingham, the order above named was given by Her Majesty's Government to Foreign manufacturers?

MR. BRAND: If Questions are to be put with respect to every paragraph which appears in the newspapers about the Expedition to Suakin the time of the House will be largely occupied. There is no truth whatever in the statement.

GERMANY—TREATY WITH SAMOA.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether any reply has yet been received to Lord Granville's Note to Count Münster, of the 16th February, on the subject of the German Treaty with Samoa?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir.

GERMAN COLONIAL POLICY—THE DESPATCH OF MAY 5.

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether a copy of the Despatch of Prince Bismarck to Count Münster, of May 5th 1884, has been at any time communicated to the Foreign Office; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will endeavour to induce the Government of Germany to consent to its being published?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The despatch was never communicated to us; but a portion of it was confidentially read to Lord Granville about 10 days ago. He is not aware of any public object in taking any further steps in the matter.

AFRICA (EAST COAST)—GERMAN ANNEXATIONS NEAR ZANZIBAR.

MR. SLAGG asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What steps are being taken by Her Majesty's Government for the protection of British commercial interests in view of the recent annexation by Germany of territory in the interior of Africa immediately beyond the dominions of the Sultan of Zanzibar?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: British commercial interests within the

territories of the Sultan of Zanzibar are protected by Treaty. Territories beyond the Sultan's Dominions fall within the provisions for freedom of commerce agreed to in the recent Conference at Berlin.

SOUTH AFRICA—BECHUANALAND.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that Sir Charles Warren desired the return of Mr. Mackenzie to Bechuanaland, that Sir Hercules Robinson has advised against such return, and that Lord Derby has upheld the views of Sir Hercules Robinson; and, whether he can state to the House the substance of Lord Derby's decision? He would also ask, whether it was true that the civil government of Bechuanaland had been placed under the direct authority of Sir Hercules Robinson?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: The substratum of truth in these reports consists in the fact that certain questions have been raised in various quarters as to the wisdom and expediency of the continuance of Mr. Mackenzie with Sir Charles Warren. The Secretary of State, after communicating with Sir Hercules Robinson, telegraphed to Sir Charles Warren, saying that he has no desire to interfere with him, and leaves the matter entirely to his own discretion. As to the last Question of the hon. Baronet, I cannot understand upon what the report is based. No doubt, technically, Sir Charles Warren is under the High Commissioner; but there has been no change in his position since he was sent out.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE BABBICOMBE MURDER—ATTEMPTED EXECUTION AT EXETER.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will lay upon the Table a Copy of all Correspondence between the Home Office and the Sheriff of Devonshire relating to the late attempted execution at Exeter?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he had addressed a letter to the High Sheriff of Devonshire on this subject; but the Correspondence was not yet complete. When it was, he would show it to the right hon. Gentleman, and place it on the Table if he desired it.

ARMY—ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT—OLD ARMY STORES.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, If he will state how the sum of £115,000, estimated proceeds of the sales of old stores and materials, to be appropriated in aid of Vote 12, Army Estimates 1885-6, is made up?

Mr. BRAND: The sum is made up as follows:—Ordinary Woolwich Sales, £35,000; sale of old guns, shot, and metal, £45,000; sale of miscellaneous stores, £10,000; barrack and other damages, £25,000—total, £115,000.

NAVY BUILDING, &c.—TORPEDO BOATS.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will state how many first and second class torpedo boats have been ordered by the Admiralty since 1880; and, how many of them have been delivered by the contractors, and completed for service at sea?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Seven wood-built torpedo boats ordered in 1882 have been delivered. Two are fully completed for service. The other five are being prepared for issue to ships as required. Five first class and two second class boats were ordered last year, but have not yet been delivered. Tenders have recently been invited for 10 additional first class boats.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED WOUNDING OF DENIS MURPHY AT CASTLEISLAND, CO. KERRY.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What are the facts connected with the wounding of Denis Murphy at Castleisland, county Kerry?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: On the night of the 21st ultimo, two constables, named Dowd and Devlin, who had been sent on patrol near the house of a man named John Murphy, reported that a shot had been fired into the house through a window, and that Denis Murphy, a son of the occupant, had been wounded. This report of the occurrence was confirmed by the members of the Murphy family, and the police, who were turned out and scoured the country, arrested 11 men who were

found to be out of their houses and in the neighbourhood of the occurrence. These men were brought up before the Resident Magistrate and remanded. Subsequently, suspicions were aroused as to the account given by the two policemen; and on being pressed it was admitted by them that the night being wet and stormy they had sought shelter in Murphy's house, and that the injury to Denis Murphy had been occasioned by the accidental discharge of Constable Devlin's rifle. The men who had been arrested were thereupon released, and the two constables were, by order of the Lord Lieutenant, summarily dismissed from the Force. I regret to say that Denis Murphy has since died of his injuries, and a Coroner's inquest is at present being held in the case. Constable Devlin has been arrested, and the Attorney General has advised that he should be prosecuted on a charge of manslaughter.

MR. SEXTON: I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the constables, finding that the rifle had been discharged, proceeded to smash the windows of the house; why the authorities allowed five days to elapse before the tale of the outrage was contradicted; and if they will lay upon the Table a copy of the entry made at the police station?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have given the House, as succinctly as I could, a full account of what occurred.

MR. HEALY: What compensation is to be given to the Murphy family?

MR. O'BRIEN: Have the Government any means of judging whether other so-called outrages in Ireland are not of the same character?

[No reply.]

MR. HEALY gave Notice that he would repeat his Question regarding the compensation to these people at a future day.

NAVY BUILDING, &c.—BELTED CRUISERS.

MR CHARLES WILSON asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, For how many belted cruisers they are inviting tenders, and to whom the invitations have been sent, and when the tenders are to be sent in?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Tenders have been invited for five belted cruisers from 14 firms. It is not considered advisable to give their names. The tenders are due on April 17. An earlier date was originally fixed, and the extension of time has been granted at the request of some of the contractors.

MR. CHARLES WILSON asked whether Earle's Shipbuilding Company had been included in the list of firms?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, it was not advisable to give the names of the contractors.

SCOTLAND—THE CROFTERS' COMMISSION—HIGHLAND FISHERIES.

MR. MUNRO-FERGUSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in view of the peculiar circumstances of the Highlands, as shown in the Report of the Crofters' Commission, the branch of this Report dealing with Highland fisheries will be duly considered in connection with that of the Piers and Harbours Commission; and, whether any action on the part of the Government n respect of these special recommendations may be expected during the present Session of Parliament?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the President of the Board of Trade had requested him to answer the Question. He thought he had partly answered it the other day, when he stated that the matter would be considered in connection with the Report of the Piers and Harbours Commission. The latter part of the Question, he was sorry to say, he could not answer.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—HIGHLAND SCHOOLS.

MR. MUNRO-FERGUSON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether the Report of Mr. Craik on Schools in the Highlands, dated 30th October 1884, has yet been under consideration; whether any of Mr. Craik's recommendations will be embodied in the Code of 1885; and, whether there is any prospect of relief being afforded to the present heavy burthen of the rates; and, if so, in what manner?

MR. MUNDELLA: The whole question of education in the Highlands is at present under consideration, and will be dealt with very shortly. We intend to accomplish as much as possible through

the Code, and we hope that legislation will not be required.

GENERAL GORDON—VERIFICATION OF MANNER OF DEATH, &c.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Secretary of State for War, If any further attempts have been made by Lord Wolseley to verify the conflicting accounts of the manner of General Gordon's death, or to ascertain what became of his body; and, if it would not be possible to communicate with the Mahdi for the purpose of obtaining information?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON, in reply, said, that Lord Wolseley was fully aware of the great anxiety felt in this country to obtain particulars as to the fate of General Gordon; and he would, of course, use every possible means in his power to obtain such information. Under these circumstances, he did not think there would be any advantage in suggesting to Lord Wolseley any particular mode of operation for the purpose.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked, whether the noble Marquess was aware that any other steps had been taken by Lord Wolseley than those published some time ago? Accounts were given by persons who had returned from Khartoum; but those accounts differed very much.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, it was impossible to verify the conflicting accounts given by Natives who had returned from Khartoum. He was not aware of what steps had been taken by Lord Wolseley since those accounts were received; but, as he had stated, Lord Wolseley knew perfectly well the anxiety felt in this country in the matter, and would do all that was possible to get information.

EGYPT EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN—KASSALA.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If Her Majesty's Government will take steps to let the garrison of Kassala know the determination of the Government to abandon them, in order that they may make such terms as are possible with their savage assailants, and thus save themselves and the inhabitants of the town from the indiscriminate slaughter that must necessarily ensue if the town be taken by storm?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: On the 4th of February last Sir Evelyn Baring and General Stephenson advised that the Governor of Kassala should be informed that no Expedition, English or Egyptian, could be sent to Kassala, and that he must judge for himself whether to try to make his way down to the coast or come to terms with the rebels. Colonel Chermside, on February 7, proposed to inform the Governors of Kassala and Sanheit to arrange as they might deem best for their garrisons terms with the Abyssinians or the rebels. Colonel Chermside also proposed to inform King John that any proposals emanating from Kassala had his concurrence. These proposals were approved on February 7.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Ministers intend to take steps to relieve the besieged garrison of Kassala and the 20,000 inhabitants of that town, now hard pressed by famine; and, if not, whether Her Majesty's Ministers will permit the Sultan of Turkey, who is Sovereign of Egypt, to send Ottoman troops to save the garrison and people of Kassala from massacre and slavery?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In a previous answer I have already replied to the first part of this Question. Her Majesty's Government have several times suggested that the Sultan should resume the direct administration of the Red Sea littoral, but without success. There is no reason to suppose that His Majesty has any wish to take measures for the relief of Kassala.

Mr ASHMEAD-BARTLETT wished to know whether it was not a fact that the Khedive, 15 months ago, asked Her Majesty's Ministers to allow him to appeal for help to his Sovereign the Sultan of Turkey to assist him in relieving the garrisons, and was refused permission; and at what period since that appeal was made had it been suggested that the Sultan should be asked to relieve the garrisons?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the answer was in the Papers which had already been laid before the House.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked, whether he was to understand that the Government were unwilling to take any steps for the relief of Kassala?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he had given a very full reply to the hon. Gentleman's Question.

Afterwards—

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that in answer to a Question which he had put earlier in the evening as to relieving the besieged garrison of Kassala, he had received from the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs an answer which did not appear to him clear or satisfactory. He, therefore, begged to ask the Prime Minister, if he would be so good as to state whether Her Majesty's Government could not take some steps to relieve the garrison at Kassala?

MR. GLADSTONE: I believe the hon. Gentleman refers to some employment which he proposes of the Forces of General Graham; and as my noble Friend has already stated the object with which that Force is to be employed I could not undertake to make any addition to his statement.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked, whether he understood the right hon. Gentleman to mean that the Government were not going to make any effort whatever to relieve the garrison?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no addition to make to the reply of my noble Friend.

ARMY — MILITIA OFFICERS ON SERVICE IN AFRICA.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER asked the Secretary of State for War, If he will issue a Return of the number of Militia Officers now on service in Africa, and with Line Battalions at home, and if he will state how many have just been accepted in response to the recent offer from the War Office; if he will give the number of Militia Officers on the 1st of January 1885; whether the present short number of Officers will not be further depleted, in the course of some two months, by absorption into the Line of those now serving; whether it is the case that some fifteen per cent. of Militia Officers now serving would, in case their regiments were embodied, have to retire in consequence of their professional and other engagements, and that thus they cannot be regarded as available or efficient; and, whether, in view of the inefficiency of the Militia, as at present constituted, he will give the matter his serious attention?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: A Return of Militia Officers on service in Africa and with Line battalions at home, and of those just accepted in response to the recent offer, can be given if the hon. Baronet will move for it. On the 20th of February there were 2,804 officers serving with the Militia. The successful candidates in the March examination will be transferred to the Line, and will, of course, cause vacancies in the Militia. There is no record of the professions or engagements of Militia Officers. I am not prepared to admit the inefficiency of the Militia, though the number of vacancies for officers is to be regretted. Since the answer I gave in this House on the 20th of February, the number of applications for Militia commissions has increased.

In reply to a further Question from Sir FREDERICK MILNER,

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that two months ago a number of queries were addressed to commanding officers of regiments; and suggestions were invited from them as to the means they would recommend in order to increase the number of applications for Militia commissions. Some of the replies involved recommendations of increased allowances, but no very large proportion of them; and whether the hon. Member's suggestion was among them he did not know.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND) — THE RIOTS AT DERRY — ALLEGED ORANGE ATTACK ON SISTERS OF MERCY.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the inquiry held by two resident magistrates under the Crimes Act, at Londonderry, with reference to the attack by an Orange mob upon two Sisters of Mercy, proved abortive owing to the four defendants, who were in attendance, not having been brought properly before the Court; whether any prosecution of an agrarian character under the Crimes Act, in the South of Ireland, has failed owing to a similar mishap, or was left in charge of an inferior police officer; whether the Crown Solicitor was instructed to attend, as in the case of the late prosecutions at Drangan, county Tipperary; who is to blame for the miscarriage of justice; and, whether, in any fresh proceedings that may be taken, care will be taken to have the Crown represented by a com-

potent legal official? In putting this Question he would like further to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the persons who witnessed the attack did not belong to the Orange faction; and whether any steps had been taken for the discovery of evidence by holding a secret inquiry under the 16th section of the Crimes Act?

Mr. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the alleged attack by an Orange mob upon two Sisters of Mercy, really consisted of an attack, by word of mouth, of four little boys, three of whom were eleven years of age, and the other only fourteen; and, whether such a case is within the provisions of the Crimes Act 1882?

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How it happened that the cases reserved for hearing by a Crimes Act Court at Derry, on Thursday last, fell through; were the police concerned in the prosecution afforded professional advice; if not, why was it withheld from them; why the Crown was not professionally represented in Court, and why the prosecution was left to be conducted by a constable of police, whose intervention in the case was objected to by the solicitor for the defence; and, what further steps are being taken to have the cases duly dealt with?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The defendants in this case, who are described in the depositions as young boys, were members of a disorderly crowd which used insulting language towards two nuns; and one of them, it appeared, raised a stick over the ladies' heads. They were summoned by the police for using language calculated to provoke a breach of the peace, and for obstructing the highway. On the case coming before the magistrates, the latter, under the mistaken belief that the case was one coming within the provisions of the Crimes Act, ordered that the defendants should be brought before a Crimes Court. The Government, however, were advised that the case was not one coming within the Crimes Act, or which could be prosecuted under its provisions, and in consequence of this the Sessional Crown Solicitor did not receive instructions to attend. There is no intention, however, to allow the offenders to escape; and the Sessional Crown Solicitor has been instructed to take immediate steps to make the defendants amenable to the ordinary law.

Mr. O'BRIEN: Might I ask again whether the account the right hon. Gentleman has given of the occurrence is not that of persons who belong to the Orange faction; and, whether any steps have been taken by the Government, under the 16th section of the Crimes Act, to discover evidence?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The account I have given is an account I have received from the police and other parties.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—TROOPS IN THE SOUDAN—SUN SPECTACLES.

Captain AYLMER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether provision has been made for a supply of coloured glass spectacles for use of our troops in the Soudan?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sun spectacles have been provided for all troops sent either to Suakin or to the Nile; 27,000 pairs have been sent to Egypt from August, 1884, to February, 1885. Reserves of 3,000 pairs are now being sent out for Suakin and Egypt respectively.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—SUPPLIES FOR OFFICERS—IMPOSITION OF CUSTOMS DUTY BY EGYPT.

Captain AYLMER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that supplies for our Officers in the Soudan, are charged a Custom Duty by the Egyptian Government when landed at Suakin or other Egyptian or Soudanese Port?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: There is no information on the subject in the War Office; but inquiries have been made.

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS—MILTON ABBAS SCHOOL.

Mr. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he has any reason to suppose that the Charity Commissioners have abandoned the scheme for the Milton Abbas Schools at Blandford, which has been objected to by the inhabitants of that town and districts, and which was stated in the agenda paper

at the last Quarter Sessions of the county of Dorset to have been so given up?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Charity Commissioners inform me that they have not abandoned the scheme for the Milton Abbas School at Blandford, but hope to be able to submit it to the Education Department in the course of the present month.

SOUTH AFRICA—METHUEN'S HORSE.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether there is any intention to recall Colonel Methuen's Irregular Cavalry from South Africa for service in the Soudan; if so, how it is proposed to replace them?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I would refer my hon. Friend to the answer given a few days ago by the Secretary of State for War, in which he said that it would not be possible, until further information should have been received as to the progress of affairs in South Africa, to say whether any such offers could be accepted. And I can assure my hon. Friend that there can be no question of moving this force from South Africa until its services there are no longer required.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE MURDER OF FRANCIS HUGHES.

MR. DEASY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether it is intended that the three Orangemen charged with the murder of Francis Hughes, a Catholic, within a few perches of the Orange Hall at Keady, county Armagh, shall be tried at the assizes of Armagh, in which county the jury panel is very largely composed of members of the Orange Society; and, whether it is intended to change the venue so as to ensure an impartial trial?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that, after careful consideration, the Attorney General had come to the conclusion that there was no necessity for a change of venue in trying the accused in this case.

ROADS AND BRIDGES (IRELAND)—DRUMHARIFFE BRIDGE, COUNTIES ROSCOMMON AND LEITRIM.

MR. O'KELLY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact the contractor for the Drumhariffe Bridge across the Shannon between Roscommon and Leitrim was entitled to receive monthly 90 per cent. of the money due, according as the work progressed; is he not now, under the terms of his contract, entitled to a sum of in or about £200 for work performed, in addition to other sums claimed for extra work; can he state on what grounds payments have not been made to such contractor of sums due to him; is not the bridge at present used for the purposes of transit; and, when will payment of the sums due be made?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This Question only appears on the Paper to-day, and I have not had time to make any inquiries; but, as at present advised, I do not think it is a matter in which the Government could interfere.

ARMY—PEAT-MOSS LITTER.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the peat-moss litter with which the experiments were lately made in Military stables was from Germany or from Ireland?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am informed that the peat-moss litter with which the experiments were made was from Germany.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Would the noble Lord make inquiry as to whether any satisfactory experiments have been made on the Curragh or elsewhere with Irish peat-moss litter?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I will inquire.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Would the noble Lord make inquiries as to the peat-moss litter from Yorkshire?

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the noble Lord whether a committee of Artillery officers did not within the last two years report in favour of peat-moss litter?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I will make inquiries upon that subject also.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—MOUNTJOY PRISON.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the fact that five warders of Mountjoy Prison were summarily dismissed by the Hon. Charles Bourke because they

respectfully protested against being compelled to carry out an order of so indecent and degrading a character that it is impossible publicly to describe it; did Mr. Bourke, immediately after dismissing the five warders, cause the order to be cancelled; did the officers subsequently apply to be reinstated; and, was this refused?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Five warders were recently dismissed from Mountjoy Prison for refusing to obey an order which the General Prisons Board thought it necessary to issue for the maintenance of order in the prison. The Question of the hon. Member greatly exaggerates the character of the order, and it is not true that it has been cancelled by the Prisons Board, or that they have any intention of cancelling it. The dismissed warders did apply to be reinstated; but the Board report that, having regard to the gravity of the offence and the importance of maintaining discipline in a large establishment such as Mountjoy, they are unable to accede to the request.

Mr. HEALY: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it is intended to allow this order to remain in force; and whether it exists in other prisons?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I said the Board had no intention of cancelling it.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE CAMEROONS—ALLEGED INSULT BY GERMANY TO THE BRITISH FLAG.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Prime Minister a Question of which I have given him private Notice—Whether he can give the House any information with respect to the alleged insult to the British Flag at the Cameroons?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I can really give no information upon the subject, because no confirmation of the rumour published in the newspapers has been received by Her Majesty's Government; and we have likewise ascertained that no confirmation has been received at the German Embassy. It would be idle to conjecture whether there is any truth in the statement; but if there is any foundation for it, it cannot be an incident likely to lead to any serious consequences.

ARMY (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—MARTINI-HENRY CARTRIDGES.

Viscount LEWISHAM inquired, Whether the Secretary of State for War had seen an account of the failure of the Martini-Henry cartridges in a recent battle in the Soudan; and, whether Expedition No. 3 was to be provided with the same cartridges as Expedition No. 2?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, that he was aware of the statement, and the matter was now under consideration.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN BOUNDARY COMMISSION.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, Whether it was true that the Afghan Boundary Commission had retired to Zoorabad, on Persian territory?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No, Sir. The Commission, as I stated the other day, is at Gulran, on Afghan territory.

INDIA—THE BENGAL TENANCY BILL.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true, as stated in *The Indian Statesman* of February 3rd, that, whilst the average total incidence of rent including the Government revenue demand in Bengal is only two rupees per acre, the Government revenue demand alone in the North-Western Provinces amounts to three rupees per acre, in addition to a rental of three rupees more; and, whether it is true, as stated by the same paper, that Lord Dufferin has received "instructions from home" to pass the Bengal Tenancy Bill?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The average rate of Government revenue per acre in the North-Western Provinces is one rupee two annas three pies, as the hon. Member will see on reference to page 197 of the Indian Statistical Abstract No. 15. It is impossible to say what is the average rate per acre in Bengal. Neither the area cultivated nor the amount of rent realized from that area is known with accuracy; but detailed inquiries made in several districts in 1883 tend to show that the average rent rate considerably exceeds two rupees per acre. Her Majesty's Government would see with satisfaction the passing of a mea-

sure on the subject of Bengal Tenancy during the present Session of the Legislative Council at Calcutta; but no instructions from home have been given to Lord Dufferin to pass the Bill.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: I will ask the hon. Gentleman, whether he can confirm or contradict the statement contained in the following telegram from a Native Member of the Viceroy's Council:—

"Motion for re-publication of Bill in the vernacular, and delay for three weeks not carried. Opposed on the ground that Executive Council wished to go to Simla. If delay allowed Bill would have to be discussed;"

and, whether this Bill is being pressed forward with such urgency in consequence of the Viceroy and Council feeling it convenient to go to a cooler climate?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The hon. Member asks me a Question on a subject of which I am ignorant. If he will give me Notice of the Question, and allow me time in which to receive a reply from India, I shall be able to answer him.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: In consequence of the extreme urgency of this question—the Bill being within three days of being passed—I beg to give Notice that before proceeding with Public Business, I shall ask leave to discuss the matter on a Motion for the Adjournment of the House.

TREATY OF BERLIN—ALBANIA AND MACEDONIA.

MR. BRYCE asked, Whether the Foreign Office had any report as to disturbances in Albania and Macedonia?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No; not up to the time I left the Foreign Office.

EGYPT FINANCE, &c.).

MR. PULESTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he could give the House any information about the financial arrangements with respect to Egypt?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I have no information on the subject since the statement I last made to the House. I stated then that I had been informed that the matter was nearly concluded. I was so informed on the authority of an Ambassador.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

In answer to Dr. CAMERON,

MR. GLADSTONE said, that not having closed the Miscellaneous Estimates last night, the Government proposed to go on with them on Thursday, and to take the Naval Estimates on Monday next.

ADJOURNMENT—NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE (RULE 2—ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE).

INDIA—THE BENGAL TENANCY BILL.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL, Member for Wigtonshire, rose in his place, and asked leave to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely—the procedure of the Viceroy's Council at Calcutta in pressing forward the Bengal Tenancy Bill without giving time for due consideration or translation thereof into the vernacular.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Baronet (Sir Herbert Maxwell) proposes to move the Adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a matter of urgent public importance—namely, the procedure of the Viceroy's Council at Calcutta in pressing forward the Bengal Tenancy Bill without giving due time for the consideration or translation thereof into the vernacular. Is it your pleasure that the Motion should be made? ["No, no!"]

The pleasure of the House not having been signified—

MR. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places.

And not less than forty Members having accordingly risen in their places,

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, that, at first sight, it might appear somewhat presumptuous on the part of a private Member to interrupt the course of Public Business for the purpose of discussing a matter of such grave importance as the policy of the Viceroy and his Council in India; but it seemed to him that no one except a private Member would feel himself at liberty to do so. If a right hon. Gentleman on either of the Front Benches were to do so, he would feel that he was taking upon himself the responsibility of run-

ning the risk of interfering with the policy which commended itself to Her Majesty's Viceroy in India; but he (Sir Herbert Maxwell) felt that, in approaching this subject, he was relieved in a great sense from such responsibility from the fact of his never having held any official position in that House. He had already read to the House part of a telegram which he had received from the Maharajah of Durbhunga, one of the Native Members of the Council, a name which would commend itself to the House. That message concluded with these words—

"We, however, hold that a Liberal Government like the present ought first to consult the convenience of the nation instead of their own. They wish to rush the Bill through next week. Kindly bring the matter before Parliament."

When that request was put to him by a person of such importance as the Maharajah, he felt compelled to accede to it, in the only manner in which it was possible for a private Member to do. When he said the matter was urgent, he wished to point out that the Bill was introduced into the Council only a fortnight ago. There had been Tenancy Bills under the consideration of the Council for some time past; but this was a radically different Bill in many details from those which had been already introduced and withdrawn, and the complaint made by the Zemindars of Bengal was, that it had not been long enough before the country to let its provisions be known. He (Sir Herbert Maxwell) had often had to object, in the strongest possible way, to the home legislation of the present Government; but he never had to make the complaint that their legislation was hurried through in an indecent manner. Due time was always allowed for deliberating upon and discussing measures; and if such time were ever refused by the Government the nation would insist upon it being given. But what power had the Zemindars of Bengal to insist upon delay? None at all. The only power they could exercise was through their Representatives in the Council; and when those Representatives were overridden, on every point they brought forward, by the compact Government majority, no course was open to them except to appeal to public opinion at home, in the hope that some modification might be had of the system. As far as the Council of the Viceroy was concerned, the case of the Zemindars was perfectly hopeless. In *The Times* of Monday a despatch had appeared, containing an account of the manner in which the Opposition in the Council were being met. It said that most of the Amendments to the Bill were either withdrawn, or defeated by the compact official majority voting to order. This matter was urgent, because if things were allowed to take their course the Bill would be passed in three days' time. It was also important, because it dealt with vast interests in an important Province of India—with the entire question of landowning and land tenancy. He was not prepared to say that the Bill was uncalled for. He did not know enough about the subject. He was not familiar enough with the provisions of land tenancy in Bengal to say whether they were entirely satisfactory or not. In fact, he believed, in many respects, the permanent settlement effected by Lord Cornwallis was unsatisfactory; but the fact that it was called a permanent settlement was a reason why an alteration of it should not be approached without due deliberation. Again, the matter was urgent in this respect. Was this a time when the Government of India was so secure in the affections of every class of the people—when the Frontiers were so secure from foreign molestation—that it could afford to alienate from us the affections and interests of the entire class of the landowners in Bengal? That, undoubtedly, would be the case if the Bill were pressed with undue haste. This class resembled, in many respects, the loyal garrison in Ireland; but there was this difference—that the Zemindars, unable to draw Party distinctions, would associate this legislation with the Imperial Government. Recent legislation had done much to alienate the loyal classes in Ireland from the Liberal Party, and it was possible that the Zemindars of Bengal might similarly be alienated from the Imperial Government. Being unwilling to delay further the progress of the Redistribution Bill, he would conclude by asking the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India for some assurance that the measure before the Viceroy's Council would not be passed with undue haste. He trusted that the reason why sufficient time in which to translate the measure into the

Native language had not as yet been given was not that the Viceroy and his Council were in a hurry to get to Simla. He begged to move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL and Mr. MACFARLANE rose together. Mr. Speaker called upon the former hon. Gentleman.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he objected strongly to the course taken by the hon. Member opposite (Sir Herbert Maxwell). He thought nothing could be more inappropriate than the Motion of the hon. Member; for the reason that he was quite sure that the House knew nothing at all about the matter. He did not believe that the 40 hon. Members who had risen with him (Sir Herbert Maxwell) understood the question; and he was quite sure that the hon. Baronet who moved the adjournment knew least of all. It was an enormously difficult question, and he was free to confess that he himself did not understand it. He did not know the details of the Bill; but this, however, he did know—that the subject had not been hurried over. On the contrary, what Bengal had reason to complain of was the immense delay that had taken place, although the question had been made the subject of mischievous agitation for years. He asserted it was a matter of enormous public importance that this question should be settled, and not made the subject of a continued agitation and a war of classes. It was true there was some analogy between this question and the Irish Question; but there was this difference—namely, that the landowners of Ireland had a legal status to be considered absolute proprietors of the land; whereas, since 1793, the rights of the Zemindars had been limited by law, and this Bill was wanted to define and ascertain the exact limits of those rights as respects the ryots. The Zemindars of Bengal were mostly good and loyal subjects of the British Crown; and it was, he trusted, unnecessary to be unjust to any other class in order to secure their affection. The hon. Member was wrong in contending that the Bill ought to be delayed for some considerable time. He agreed, however, with the hon. Member in condemning the growing tendency of the Members of the Indian Council to hurry over business in order that they might leave Calcutta, and get away to Simla. He remembered the time when the Members of the Government and the Council were obliged to remain in Calcutta all the year round, and yet managed to thrive pretty well. He objected to the unsettlement of the Government, which resulted in a constant tendency on the part of the Members of the Government to hurry away. The British Government were not so weak in India as to refuse to do an act of justice, and it should be done, though an important measure of this kind should not be indecently hurried through. He hoped the Bill would be well settled, and if there were any difficulty in settling it in the time he thought the Members of Council ought to remain a few days in Calcutta for the purpose.

MR. MACFARLANE said, that those who knew something should say something to those who knew nothing. With respect to the subject before the House, some of the statements of the hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Herbert Maxwell), if left uncontradicted, were calculated to mislead the public. The hon. Baronet had said that the Bill was brought before the Council only a fortnight ago; whereas the fact was that the Bill, or one very like it, had been before the Council for years and years, and was the result of a Commission upon this very subject. Then the hon. Baronet said the Bill was to be passed in a foreign language; but unless Bills for India were passed in a great number of languages they must be foreign to some of the people they affected. After all, this Bill was merely an extension of an Act passed in 1859, against which the Zemindars made exactly the same outcry. The hon. Baronet also said that the Zemindars of Bengal were a formidable body, and that they ought to be conciliated; but the hon. Baronet evidently did not understand the object of the Bill, which was not to conciliate the Zemindars, but to conciliate 70,000,000 of their tenants. Which of the two classes, he (Mr. Macfarlane) should like to know, was best worth conciliating? He did not pledge himself to the details of the Bill; but as to the principles, in

his opinion they were nothing more than justice.

MR. J. K. CROSS said, he did not intend to enter into the merits or demerits of the Bill; but he thought he should explain to the House the mode in which the matter was brought before him by the hon. Baronet. That night, when he came down to the House, he received a Notice from the hon. Baronet saying that unless the answer he (Mr. J. K. Cross) gave to the Question of the hon. Baronet was perfectly satisfactory the latter would move the adjournment of the House in order to bring the matter before the House. He told the hon. Baronet, practically, the answer he was going to give, and the hon. Baronet said he would consider whether it was sufficient. What was the Question the hon. Baronet asked? He asked whether he (Mr. J. K. Cross) was aware that this Bill, which had only been before the Council a fortnight, had not been translated into the vernacular, and told him, at the same time, that an eminent Native gentleman, a Member of the Legislative Council in Bengal, had sent a telegram, stating that the Bill had not been translated, and wished for the intervention of Parliament. That was an astonishing statement to him. If the hon. Baronet would give him time he would telegraph to India and get the facts of the case, and place them in his hands. He did not see that he could do anything more. He could only say that if, instead of sending him a note at half-past 5 o'clock that evening, the hon. Baronet had called upon him any time during the day, and asked his attention to a question of this importance, he would have been glad to place himself in communication with India at once on the subject. He hoped the hon. Baronet would accept this explanation, and withdraw his Motion for Adjournment.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, that nothing could be fairer than the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. J. K. Cross); but, at the same time, he was not quite sure whether he understood the hon. Gentleman to promise that the Bill should not be hurried through until it had been printed and circulated in the vernacular. [Mr. MACFARLANE: Which vernacular?] He knew of no case more than the present in which it was reasonable and desirable that a private Member should avail himself of the Rule relating to Motions for Adjournment, and bring them into requisition than on this occasion. He would remind hon. Gentlemen opposite, including some Members of the Government who were conspicuous for their disorderly interruptions during the speech of the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigton (Sir Herbert Maxwell), that the House of Commons discharged the functions of a Senate as well as those of a vestry; and if the House was to vindicate its claims to be the great Council of the nation, and to attend to the affairs of the whole British Empire, it must be occasionally content, at the risk of spending a few moments, to withdraw itself from merely domestic and Party political affairs in order to give attention to the vital and important interests of our Indian Empire. This Bill seemed to him to be simply an adaptation to Hindostan of the principles which had had such an unenviable notoriety in connection with land legislation in Ireland. That property guaranteed by previous legislation should be summarily taken away at a few days' notice without those primarily affected by it having a legitimate opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the contents of the Bill was, in his humble judgment, a monstrous and outrageous act of despotism, which the House should be slow to sanction. He hoped the Government would allow the House clearly to understand, not that three or four days after the Bill was passed his hon. Friend the Member for Wigton would be privileged with an interview at the India Office, and be told that the Government had ascertained that the Bill had passed, and that they could not pursue the subject further, but that the assurance of the Under Secretary of State for India was a *bona fide* one—namely, that Her Majesty's Government would communicate by telegraph with the Government in India, and would insure that due deliberation was observed, in order that the persons interested in the Bill might be made acquainted with the contents of the Bill, and have a legitimate time to consider so important a measure before it became law.

MR. GLADSTONE: The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. Lowther), with his usual moderation of language, relies upon the stock of knowledge that

he possesses for the statement he makes, that there is now being perpetrated in India a monstrous and outrageous act of despotism. The violent language which the right hon. Gentleman uses both here and elsewhere does not tend to carry conviction to the minds of candid and unprejudiced gentlemen in the country, or in that House. The hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Herbert Maxwell), by his Motion, appears to me to ask for time. The right hon. Gentleman has supported the Motion; but he wants no time, because he says this Bill is an act of plunder; and what is the use of demanding time for an act of plunder? He has full knowledge of it already, and if he has had time to acquire that knowledge which he declares he possesses, and which we can judge of from the epithets he used, surely those who are in India, and who have been discussing it and hearing of it for two or three years, must have an adequate knowledge of it also. The right hon. Gentleman says that this is a very fortunate and happy use of the 40 Members' Rule. I am bound to express an entirely opposite opinion. The hon. Baronet, I think, is under a mistake in bringing this matter forward as one of urgent public importance without having previously done his best to obtain information as to the actual state of the case. No opportunity has been given to us of obtaining a knowledge of the actual state of the case by telegraphic communication. What is the state of knowledge with which the House is now called upon to discuss this matter? We have heard a telegram once read by the hon. Baronet which he said was sent to him by a Native Member of the Council—we have not got that telegram before us, and it is difficult to recollect its exact terms—and upon the mere strength of that telegram Her Majesty's Government are desired to interfere with the proceedings of the Council of India. In one thing I sympathize very much with the hon. Baronet—namely, in the weight he is evidently disposed to attach to the opinion of Native Members of Council. I believe the telegram states that the Bill has been passed by an official majority. Do I understand him to say that none but official Members voted for the Bill?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, he had only the information contained in that telegram, which he would again read for the information of hon. Members.

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not find that there is any statement in the telegram that the Bill was carried by an official majority.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: That was in the telegram in *The Times* of yesterday.

MR. GLADSTONE: Well, I want to know whether the hon. Baronet has any knowledge as to what is exactly meant by carrying the Bill by an official majority? Was there any statement in *The Times* on that subject? These words are often very loosely used. I should like to know what course was taken by the other Native Members of the Council? It has been stated by my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India that this Bill is in substance the same as has been before the Council in former years; and it is within my own knowledge that Lord Ripon considered that he was handing over to Lord Dufferin substantially the same Bill. ["Oh, oh!"] We have no evidence of its being a Bill of a different character. I must confess it appears to me that the position is a very singular one. Are we to say that, upon the view of a single Member of Council sending a telegram, giving his impression of the Bill, this House is to be called upon, by means of the 40 Members' Rule, and in derogation of the ordinary course of Business, distinctly to interfere with the regular action of the Legislative Council of India? It appears to me that that is a very questionable and inconvenient mode of proceeding. I know there have been cases of scandalous rapidity—I need not quote them—in passing Bills through the Legislative Council of India; but I have not heard of any such under the management of Lord Dufferin or Lord Ripon. Whenever such a case occurs it will be a very proper matter for the investigation of this House; but as the right hon. Gentleman thinks this is a most appropriate manner of using the 40 Members' Rule—I must say that a statement conveyed upon such grounds as have been recited, with such a total want of particularity—without any application to the official organ of the Indian Department to improve our knowledge of the case, does not warrant a demand that this House should use

its influence with the Executive Government for the purpose of interfering with the course of business in the Legislative Council. We must have some confidence in the Governor General and Executive Council until some grounds have been laid before us for presuming that they have acted wrongly; and I submit that no grounds have been shown which ought to overbear that general confidence, and induce us to do that which has a tendency to weaken the authority of the Legislative Council. The right hon. Gentleman has asked whether the assurance of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India was *bonâ fide?* [Mr. J. LOWTHER: I assumed that it was.] Having assumed that it was *bonâ fide*, the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to give a construction of his own, metamorphosing that assurance into something totally different, and reserving to himself, with his usual discernment and moderation, if my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State did not conform to the right hon. Gentleman's definition of the *bonâ fide* assurance, the right of coming down and accusing my hon. Friend of bad faith in not having acted up to his assurance. I do not think there is any doubt as to the *bonâ fides* of the offer of my hon. Friend; and, unquestionably, I think the House will do well to allow my hon. Friend who, I believe, is at present so occupied—to endeavour to ascertain the real facts of the case.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am always very reluctant to bring Indian questions under the consideration of this House by resorting to a Motion for Adjournment, except under very pressing and exceptional circumstances which render such a step necessary; and if the step taken by my hon. Friend (Sir Herbert Maxwell) was for the purpose of discussing the merits of this Bill, I should feel considerable hesitation in approving of, or taking any action respecting, it. But the question raised by my hon. Friend does not relate so much to the character of the Bill as to the course of proceeding on the part of the Legislative Council. He is in this position. He has been appealed to as a Member of Parliament by a Native of great distinction, who holds a most important position in that Council, to do what? Not to oppose any of the provisions of the Bill, but to bring the matter before Parliament, and to ask that time may be given for its consideration. It appears from what has been said by the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. J. K. Cross) that, under such circumstances, it is not an unreasonable thing that an inquiry should be made as to the correctness of the statement of the Native gentleman to whom reference has been made. Then the Prime Minister gets up and begins to find fault with my hon. Friend for making use of this particular opportunity of moving the adjournment of the House in order to bring the case before Parliament; and the right hon. Gentleman says that it is highly inconvenient and unfair that the course of Public Business should be thus interrupted. We are told that we should not now have raised this question at all, though it is one of great urgency, because it infringes on the time to be devoted to a matter of great internal importance, but which does not press in the same way from day to day. There is, I take it, a considerable amount of parallel between what is going on here and at the other side of the world; for while that is the answer we are given here, on the other side of the world we see in India, in reply to a request for time, an answer, not on the merits of the Bill, but that it is necessary for the Governor General and his Council to go to Simla without delay. There is a great deal of similarity between these two pleas; but neither of them touches the root of the matter—namely, that time ought to be given for the consideration of this Bill. The subtle distinctions raised by the Prime Minister are really, I think, not quite worthy of the occasion. My hon. Friend says that he has been informed by a Member of the Governor General's Council that such and such feelings are entertained on this subject; and the right hon. Gentleman meets this by asking—"Do you know what the other Members think?" I do not see that it was necessary or possible for my hon. Friend to know that. Then the right hon. Gentleman asks as to the opinions of the official Members on this subject. It is easy for the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for India to obtain that information in a very short time. In an hour or two he will probably obtain information which will set all these matters

at rest. He has shown no disinclination to give that information, and I shall be perfectly satisfied with his answer and the promise he has given. Had it not been for the rebuke which the Prime Minister has given to my hon. Friend, and which, I think, under the circumstances, was hardly called for, I might not have thought it necessary to rise.

MR. BIGGAR said, he held that it was the duty of the Legislative Council of the Viceroy to allow no delay to take place in passing this meritorious and beneficial measure into law.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the leave of the House to withdraw his Motion. [" No, no!"]

Question put, and *negatived.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) (*re-committed* BILL.—[BILL 49.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 6th March.*]

[SECOND NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

In the Committee.

PART I.

REDISTRIBUTION.

Boroughs.

Clause 2 Boroughs named in First Schedule to become parts of counties or boroughs).

Amendment again proposed, in page 1, line 12, after the word "boroughs," to insert the words "and Universities."—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. PARNELL said, he wished to submit to the Chairman a point of Order in reference to an Amendment of which he had given Notice. It was an Amendment on the first page of the Notice Paper to Clause 2, line 13, to insert after "Act," "and the University of Dublin." The point of Order to which he now wished more fully to draw the attention of the Chairman came upon the last evening that the Committee was engaged on this Bill; and it was then asked of the Chairman whether, in the event of the House negativing the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce), which had just been proposed from the Chair, the case of Trinity College *per se* could be raised by a subsequent Amendment? Considerable confusion prevailed at the time in the Committee, owing to the presence of a very large number of Members; but the Chairman then appeared to be of opinion that it would not be possible to raise the question of Trinity College by itself as a subsequent Amendment. Being very desirous of disentangling the question of Trinity College from the general question of University representation, he (Mr. Parnell) had, in the meantime, drafted the Amendment to which he had just directed the attention of the Chairman, and had placed it on the Notice Paper. He would now respectfully submit that it would not be out of Order to move that Amendment in the event of the House negativing the present Amendment, and his reason was this. The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets now under discussion had reference to, and must be interpreted with, one of the Schedules annexed to the Act; but his (Mr. Parnell's) Amendment stood entirely separate from the Schedules. It had no reference to any Schedule now in the Bill, or proposed to be inserted in it; and if it were adopted it would read as part of the Bill, and subsequently of the Act. Therefore, he would respectfully submit to the consideration of the Chairman whether the Amendment of which he had given Notice, drafted as it was, did not raise a separate and distinct question from that which was now under the consideration of the Committee? If the hon. Gentleman should so rule, he (Mr. Parnell) would be most glad to defer the discussion of the question of the separate representation of Trinity College until that Amendment was reached, in which case he presumed the Committee would at once go into the question proposed by the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets.

THE CHAIRMAN: I had considered this question when I gave my decision the other night on the general question. Since then I have had a further opportunity of considering the suggestion which the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell) has made in regard to the Schedules of

the Bill. I am clearly of opinion that if the Amendment now before the Committee should be negatived, it would not be competent for the hon. Member to raise the question again in regard to the University of Dublin at any other portion of the Committee stage of the Bill. It must be clear, I think, to the hon. Member that if it is competent for him to do so he or other hon. Members could raise the same question with regard to the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge, the Scotch Universities or the University of London; and the consequence would be that the opinion of the Committee, after having been delivered, would be stultified. Therefore, if the hon. Member wishes to raise the question of the University of Dublin he cannot do it now, but must wait another stage of the Bill—namely, the Report.

MR. PARNELL said, he was much obliged to the hon. Gentleman for the careful decision he had given, and for the attention he had paid to the matter. But, under the circumstances, he felt bound to take the opportunity, although he should have desired to disentangle the question of the separate representation of Trinity College from the general question of University representation, of inviting the attention of the Committee to the separate representation of the University of Dublin. He did not propose, in doing so, to refer to the general question of University representation, as he considered that that matter had been already very fully discussed, and nothing he could venture to add to that part of the discussion could throw any new light upon the matter, or assist the Committee in arriving at a decision. But the question of the superabundant representation of two Members which this Bill proposed to leave to Trinity College, Dublin, stood upon an entirely different footing. Even if the Committee were to decide, as it probably would, that the English and Scotch Universities should maintain their representation, the case of Trinity College, and the absurdity of giving Trinity College a representation at all, would still remain as it was. He might argue the question on the basis of numbers. He might point out that whereas it was proposed by the Bill to give to the great English and Scotch Universities 7 Members with a constituency of 25,000, or about 1 Member to 3,600, it was proposed to give to the University of Dublin 2 Members for a constituency of 4,104, or 1 Member for about 2,000.

MR. GIBSON said, that the hon. Member had added the constituencies for the English and Scotch Universities together, and had consequently given a misleading figure.

MR. PARNELL said, he did not think that his calculation was unfair. He had added the constituencies for the English and Scotch Universities together; and, as far as he was able to make out, it came to one Member for every 3,600 electors, showing a very much greater and more overwhelming disparity than the disparity which hon. Members supposed to exist in the Members proposed by the Bill to be given to the electors of Ireland and of Great Britain respectively. It was not, however, upon that argument that he intended to proceed. He admitted that if the Committee decided that it was desirable to maintain University representation at all, and if it were taken for granted that Trinity College and the University of Dublin answered the same purposes and fulfilled the same functions as the great English and Scotch Universities, then the Irish Members would not have a sufficient claim upon that basis for anything more than a reduction in the number of Representatives proposed to be given to Trinity College. But his argument was that Trinity, as a College and University, was not entitled to any separate representation at all, on the ground that it did not fulfil the functions which a University ought to fulfil, and that it was a College and University which had been from its birth the College and University of a very small section and minority of the people in Ireland, and that it remained to this day, in spite of the attempt at legislation made in 1873 by Professor Fawcett to open it, the same close body which it had always been. Trinity College was founded by Queen Elizabeth in 1591, and it had its origin, he might say, in confiscation. Its foundation-stone was laid upon confiscated land. Trinity College buildings were erected upon the site of an ancient Catholic monastery, which was confiscated, in addition to all the other possessions of the religious Order to which it belonged, in the Reign of Henry VIII. He might, perhaps, be told that that Order gave up its lands, and that

they were not confiscated; but they had been practically confiscated, as the alternative put before the heads of the Order was that of being attainted for high treason, the penalty for which, in those days, was being hanged, drawn, and quartered. It was either that or the surrender of the title to the lands. The lands and the site of the monastery, having been confiscated, fell into the possession of the Corporation of Dublin, which was, in those days, an "ascendancy institution"—a character that, he was happy to say, no longer attached to it—and the site of Trinity College, strange to say, was granted in the Reign of Elizabeth by the Corporation of Dublin for the purpose of building a new University. That University absolutely remained, in deed as well as in name, the new University which was to be the mother of the Universities of Ireland, but which had failed to propagate from herself any similar institutions throughout the length and breadth of the country. The new University remained, until 1873, in deed as well as in name, absolutely and exclusively the University of a very small minority—namely, the Episcopalian Protestants of Ireland, numbering about one-eighth of the whole population of the country. In 1873 the late Professor Fawcett, with, no doubt, the best intentions, induced the Legislature to pass an Act for the purpose of opening Trinity College; but, like many other pieces of legislation conceived, designed, and carried out by Englishmen, it failed in its objects, owing to the want of knowledge which Englishmen must always labour under in regard to the special requirements of Ireland in educational and all other matters. Previous to 1873 the Provostship, the Fellowships, and the Scholarships could only be held by members of the English Church in Ireland; and as the Scholarships were very valuable and very much sought after, some Catholics in Ireland, who found themselves qualified to compete with their Protestant fellow-countrymen for the possession of those valuable educational prizes and rewards, adopted the system which subsequently became known as "turning for Scholarships"—that was to say, during the three years' residence required within which Scholarships could be held they consented, although Catholics, to partake of the Sacraments of the Episcopalian Church in Ireland. Up to 1873 that state of affairs continued, and the valuable prizes and rewards for proficiency in educational attainments offered by Trinity College could only practically be held by the members of a particular Church in Ireland—namely, the Protestant Episcopalian Church, afterwards the Church of Ireland. In 1873, as he had said, the late Professor Fawcett introduced a Bill for the purpose of remedying this state of things, and opening the University, so far as those matters went, to the members of all religious denominations; but the result had since then been much the same. The proportion of Catholic students and Catholic undergraduates to those of other denominations in the University of Dublin had not been altered. The number of students or of undergraduates of any other denomination but the Episcopalian was still almost infinitesimal. The Governing Bodies of the University and the College were still almost absolutely and entirely in the hands of persons professing the Episcopal creed. He believed that out of 29 members of the Senate there were only four or five Catholics; that out of the members of the Council, numbering 40, there were only two Catholics; of the officers of the University and the College, numbering about 100, there were almost as few Catholics. How many Fellows out of the 30 senior and junior Fellows were Catholics he had no absolute information to give the Committee; but he believed there were not more than two at the outside, if there were so many. In fact, Trinity College remained, notwithstanding the good intentions of Professor Fawcett, the University and the College of that very small minority of the people which he had described as one-eighth of the population. It possessed endowments of very great value. Treating it as a College, it was commonly known as being the most richly-endowed College in Europe. As a University, it compared well with the large endowments of Oxford and Cambridge. The income and revenue of Trinity College, from all sources, amounted to £86,000 per annum, £31,000 a-year of which was derived from land every acre of which had been confiscated. The endowments of the great University of Oxford only amounted to £174,000; so that Trinity

College, with its narrow range and restricted limits of education, had nearly one-half of the endowments of Oxford University, and more than one-half of the endowments of Cambridge University, which amounted to £150,000. Now, what he had to put to the Committee was this—did they really intend, by sanctioning the Parliamentary representation of Trinity College, to set their seal, in this year of the 19th century, upon the maintenance of Trinity College and Dublin University as the higher educational establishment of the Irish people? Of course, they knew that the Bill had been drafted as the result of a compromise between the two Front Benches; but the Members of the Committee generally were not bound to regard any such compromise. He supposed what was called the "Loyal minority" in Ireland saw, in the maintenance of two Members for Trinity College, an opportunity of strengthening their Party, and that their spokesman, Lord Salisbury, insisted on the maintenance of the Representatives of the University of Dublin. Be that as it might, he thought the present case was singularly a case in which the independent Members of the Committee might forsake their allegiance and act and vote honestly, according to their convictions. He had nothing to say against Trinity College as a seat of learning. It had turned out many distinguished men—in fact, thousands of distinguished men. It had succeeded as the University of a small section, where others had conspicuously failed. He had no fault to find with the character of the teaching which was obtained within its ancient walls. He believed it was a fact that it could compete, in many branches, with Oxford and Cambridge, and the most distinguished Universities in England and Scotland; but he took his stand on the principle that, while they were going to give a University a permanent representation for the future, they should only give it such a representation if it could be shown that it was simply the University of a minority in a country where they had also provided University representation for the majority. In the case of Ireland it was impossible for them to do so, because there was no University education for the majority, just as there was no University available for the majority. Trinity College, with its rich endowments, sufficient for the higher educational requirements of the whole of Ireland, was the College and the University of the minority, for it would be absurd to pause over the abortive attempt at legislation by the late Government, with the view of establishing a Royal University. There was no other University to which Catholics could send their sons. The Queen's Colleges had failed, and it came to this—that they were going to give to a University that was admittedly the University of a minority a separate representation which would be abundantly sufficient for the University representation of the whole of Ireland if there were Colleges and Universities available for the majority. There was another remarkable fact which ought to be made known to the Committee. By the Act of Union one Member only was given to the University of Dublin; it was not until the Reform Act of 1833 that the number was raised to two. It therefore followed that, from every point of view, the Committee was about to do an absurd thing; and if the Bill remained as it did—if they declined, in obedience to the orders of the two Front Benches, to alter the Bill in that respect—he ventured to predict that not many years would pass before an alteration in the system of University education would take place in Ireland of such a nature and extent that not only the revenues of Trinity College, but the other endowments given by Parliament to the Queen's Colleges and the Royal University, would be shared fairly between the different religious denominations in that country; and, in the end, they would be compelled to retrace their steps, and to undo the excessive representation they had given to Dublin University, and to pass a fresh Redistribution Bill in regard to a matter which he ventured to think had been abundantly proved—namely, the glaring anomaly of the present proposal.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Parnell) seemed to him to be a speech appropriate to the subject of establishing a Catholic University for the Catholic majority of Ireland. It was certainly not a speech directed to the representation of learning by the Dublin University. He thought

that hon. Members who remembered the debates of 1873 would, perhaps, now regret that an opportunity was not taken then to do justice to the Roman Catholics of Ireland by giving them, at least, a College in the University of Dublin. There was no objection, at that time, to have established a Roman Catholic College and a common University, with a common examination, excluding merely two subjects—modern history and moral philosophy—upon which irreconcilable views were taken by Protestants and Roman Catholics. Those two subjects might well have been dealt with by the Colleges themselves, without the interference of the University; and if, at that time, or subsequently, broader views had prevailed, and if, instead of the mischievous and abortive Bill of the late Postmaster General (Professor Fawcett), they had given the Roman Catholics that to which they were eminently entitled, he thought the painful scene of that evening would have been avoided. He called it a painful scene, because they must notice the distinct degradation in the tone of the demand of the Irish people, through their Representatives, as to the representation of learning in the House of Commons. He had often heard Roman Catholics occupying a distinguished position allude to Trinity College as one of the greatest glories of Ireland; and while they lamented that the doors of Trinity College were not open to them, on account of their religious scruples, they never failed to do homage to the galaxy of Irishmen who had been educated at Trinity, and had shed a lustre on learning, besides conferring inestimable benefits upon their country. What was the tone now? He would tell the Committee what the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) alluded to, and how it had all arisen. During the autumn of last year the Roman Catholic hierarchy "threw up the sponge" in the cause of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, and placed in his hands the question of University education in Ireland. From that moment there had been a lowering of the tone, and the question now was one simply between Protestant and Catholic. He knew of no Protestants, except one or two eccentric individuals, who followed the lead of the hon. Member for the City of Cork. His followers were all Roman Catholics, and undoubtedly of very different views from those which formerly obtained in that House. They were those who would deprive the Protestant minority of every semblance of representation if they could possibly do so. ["No, no!"] They raised, in every possible way, the odious question of religious belief. Hardly an afternoon passed in that House in which a question was not asked as to the religious belief of particular individuals. That was a thing which a few years ago had almost disappeared; and his own recollection of Ireland during the last 25 years was that religious questions and religious differences of opinion had become softened in the hearts and minds of the people, and especially in those of the ecclesiastics. But now these religious questions had been revived, and every subject of the kind that was raised was simply made a question between Catholics and Protestants. [Mr. Biggar: No, no!] He had long determined to make this statement to the House, and the present appeared to him to be a good opportunity for doing so. He claimed for the Irish people, who were not represented, their ancient love and respect for learning. He claimed that they should not be supposed, in consequence of what had been said by hon. Members opposite—and they had been told more than once from the other side that education and learning ought not to be regarded at all—he claimed for them that they must not be supposed really to have degraded themselves, and to have forgotten that love of learning and love of religion which formerly distinguished them. The hon. Member for the City of Cork made a statement of a most astounding character. He had mentioned in the House the practice of "turning" for Scholarships; he told them that up to 1873 there were Roman Catholics so degraded as to receive the most solemn Sacraments of a religion not their own, for the purpose of obtaining miserable money Scholarships. He (Mr. Mitchell Henry) denied that statement altogether. Would hon. Members opposite, who were themselves Roman Catholics, affirm it? [Mr. Sullivan: Hear, hear!] He hoped, then, there would be some evidence produced of such a practice. If it was true of any considerable body

of men, he, for his own part, considered that it explained a great deal of the silence, which they had witnessed with regret, on the part of the religious teachers in Ireland, respecting outrages. But he refused to believe it If it was possible that men professing the Roman Catholic faith could so degrade themselves systematically for so small an object, it was not a matter of surprise to him that they had not heard more hearty denunciations of the outrages which had occurred in Ireland. The hon Member had spoken also of the Corporation of Dublin, and had said that the Corporation was no longer an ascendancy Corporation There was one ascendancy, however, in the Corporation of Dublin which had never been witnessed before—the ascendancy of liquor. The number of Representatives who had crept into the Corporation of Dublin, and who kept little public-houses and shebeens, was very large.

Mr WILLIAM REDMOND: I rise to Order, Sir. I beg to ask you if the hon Gentleman (Mr. Mitchell Henry) is in Order in going into the composition of the Corporation of Dublin, and in making the House acquainted with this interesting information?

THE CHAIRMAN: I understand the hon. Member to be replying to the observations of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr Parnell).

Mr MITCHELL HENRY said, the hon. Member for Wexford was evidently ashamed of the composition of the Corporation of Dublin He (Mr Mitchell Henry) was very glad that it should be so. It was part of the degradation of Irish politics which was the misfortune of the Irish people, and which would eventually recoil upon them. He, for his own part, would give his vote against the Amendment of the hon and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce). He would always vote for the representation of culture and learning as a thing desirable of itself. It was desirable even in this country, and especially was it desirable in Ireland. He would, on this as on former occasions, give his best help to the Roman Catholic population of Ireland to obtain that justice and those educational endowments which had been hitherto denied to them by prejudices which he entreated the House of Commons to rise above, but which had hitherto restrained its action. He entreated the Government—whatever Government might be in power—to retrace the halting footsteps of the past, and to give to the Roman Catholics that to which they were entitled—a resident College or a resident University for themselves equal in status, equal in emoluments, and equal in learning to Trinity College itself.

Mr. SEXTON said, the hon. Gentleman who had just addressed the Committee Mr. Mitchell Henry, and the peculiar processes of whose mind were still a mystery to those who frequently listened to him, had, in a speech dealing with the representation of Trinity College, referred to the question of the liquor interest in the Dublin Corporation. He (Mr. Sexton could only tell the hon. Member that the attack which he had made upon a particular trade, if the ascendancy of that trade were in any danger in Dublin, had secured for it a long lease of popularity in Ireland after that evening. The hon. Gentleman had cast some doubt upon the position of the Members on those Benches as Representatives of the Irish people. They had been born and bred among the Irish people, and had brought their mandate from Ireland; but it was a peculiar condition of the discussion of Irish questions in that House that when Irishmen, whose lives and interests were in common with the great body of the Irish people, rose in that House to speak of the views and hopes of Ireland, some Englishman was always sure to rise and represent himself as the true exponent of the hopes and opinions of that country. He did not think he had ever listened to a more extraordinary statement than that made by the hon. Member in reference to the observations of his hon. Friend (Mr. Parnell) as to "turning" for Scholarships in Trinity His hon. Friend did not say that any considerable number of students in Trinity had belied their faith and disgraced their manhood by conforming to the ritual of the Anglican Sacraments for the purpose of gaining the dignities and emoluments of the University. His hon. Friend did convey that such instances had occurred; and if the hon. Member, as an Englishman, was not so ignorant as he was of the history of Ireland and the records of Trinity College, he would know that at least a colourable sale and

barter of the faith of Catholic students were amongst the most disgraceful landmarks of that institution. What was there strange or new in that? Why, the whole policy of English rule in Ireland had been a policy directed against the creed of the nation more directly, he would say, until a recent period than against the nation or the race. The flower of the race were exiled after the violation of the Treaty of Limerick; the forces of the nation were broken down by the success of William of Orange; but the intense devotion of the people to their creed remained. The whole object of the Penal Laws was to induce the people to give up the practice of their own faith, and conform to the Protestant religion; and after 120 years of Penal Laws, during which many a Catholic son conformed to the Anglican creed for the purpose of turning his own father out of his estate and his home, during which any man, who turned Protestant, could take a horse from a Catholic, if the horse were over the value of £5; after all the practices resorted to for the purpose of corrupting Catholics, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mitchell Henry), an Englishman, had the audacity to make an attack upon the real Representatives of Ireland.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: Perhaps I may be allowed to correct the hon. Gentleman. I have not a single English blood relation in the world.

MR. SEXTON said, he had resumed his seat in the hope that when the hon. Member rose the Committee would have heard from him an autobiography of himself, which, if not brief, would at least have been definite; but the hon. Member simply informed the Committee that he had not an English blood relation in the world. But a man could be an Englishman without having an English blood relation in the world; and he (Mr. Sexton would submit to the common sense of the Committee that his statement with regard to the hon. Gentleman had not yet been replied to, and the hon. Member's account of himself was not complete. It was absurd to contend that recreancy to faith and to principle by individual Catholics in Ireland was anything new, or anything to be astonished at; because the whole basis of English law and policy in Ireland for the last 200 years had been to draw away the adhesion of individual Catholics of ability from their own faith in order to strengthen English ascendancy in that country. A more extraordinary connection of subjects—separated as they were from each other by an impassable gulf—had been touched upon by the hon. Member—namely, between the "turning" for Scholarships in Trinity College, and the assumed silence of ministers of religion with respect to outrages—had never before been witnessed in any speech delivered in that House. The hon. Gentleman had reproached his (Mr. Sexton's) hon. Friend (Mr. Parnell) with not having spoken to the subject. He did not believe the Committee had ever heard a speech more close to the subject than that of his hon. Friend. He believed that if the Prime Minister were to address the Committee he would admit that that was the case, because he noticed that the right hon. Gentleman had listened to it with close attention and unbroken interest. His hon. Friend proved that Trinity College, in proportion to the Universities of Great Britain, had a representation double that which it ought to have. A British University Member represented nearly 4,000 electors, and each Member for Trinity College would only represent 2,000. His hon. Friend had shown that the endowments of the University were inflated and excessive, and that it was to-day, as in the days of Elizabeth and William of Orange, a place where the sons of a small section of the nation, of one faith, planted there as a colony, received their education out of the fruit of endowments which were equitably the property of the people. His hon. Friend had further shown that these endowments and emoluments and the power of the University were in the hands of persons of one creed, and so Trinity College did not fulfil the functions of a University towards the people of Ireland. What argument could possibly be more complete or more relevant to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) than to show that the representation about to be continued to Trinity College was double that of the English Universities, and that Trinity College, as a teaching Body, was entitled to no representation at all, because it was only the University of a segment and a fraction of the Irish nation? His hon. Friend might have added, if he had chosen to

do so, that the Members for Trinity College in that House, distinguished as they were, and occupying, as they prided themselves on occupying, seats upon the Front Opposition Bench, were politicians, and politicians merely, and had never, by any speech or proceeding in that House, shown themselves to be specially qualified or distinguished as expounders or Representatives of the cause, or as the Representatives of the interests of learning in any way. They were so thoroughly politicians of a certain class, that whenever any proposal had been made in that House to restrict the liberties of the Irish people—to place the fortunes, liberties, and lives of the Irish people in the hands of any Crown official, the voices of the right hon. and learned Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench had been the first raised in favour of the proposal. When any proposal had been made to extend the facilities of Trinity College to the general body of the Irish people, and to place its endowments at the service of the country the cry of terror and apprehension of these right hon. and learned Gentlemen had been the first shrill cry raised When any proposal had been made to extend the liberties of the people of Ireland, to render them happier subjects of the Crown and worthier citizens of the Realm, the voices of the two right hon. and learned Members for Dublin University, conscious of the falseness, the hollowness, and the untenability of their own public position, had been the first raised in behalf of the miserable plea of keeping the Irish people in subjection in their own country Upon every ground—upon the ground of its gates being closed against the faith and conscience of the general body of the people, upon the ground of its excessive representation, upon the ground of its dignities and emoluments being kept in the hands of persons of one creed, upon the ground of its gross, systematic, and obstinate misuse of its political power and privilege in that House—Trinity College ought to be wiped out of the political map of Ireland He had shown, therefore, that the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork was relative to the subject; but what about the speech of his hon Friend's accuser? Because his hon. Friend had referred to the fact that individual Catholics in Trinity College had been false to their own faith, for the purpose of seeking the dignities and emoluments of that institution, the hon. Member opposite had referred to the fact as an explanation of the silence of ministers of religion in Ireland with respect to outrages The ministers of religion in Ireland, in the darkest and most evil times, had been the very men who had given up their popularity—sometimes, possibly, even risked their lives for the sake of keeping the people within those bounds of legality and good order beyond which the English, by their harsh and cruel laws, systematically did their best to drive them. He asked any Protestant Gentleman in that House—and nine out of 10 of those who were listening to him belonged to that creed—whether it was generous, whether it was fair, whether it was tolerable for a Protestant Gentleman to rise in that House and cast that unworthy sneer and that foul and baseless imputation against the ministers of the national creed of Ireland, as self-sacrificing and devoted to the cause of morals and order as any religious ministers in the world? They had been told that they had revived the religious cry. They were a Party of Catholic men who followed a Protestant Leader. They were a Party of men who belonged to that people who had shown an unexampled chivalry in politics in giving the mandate of Catholic constituencies to Members of the Protestant faith. They were a Party of Catholic men who stood by their Protestant Leader, who defended his character and justified his aims when some of the most eminent persons belonging to the Catholic Church attacked him; and he (Mr. Sexton would here repeat the saying of Daniel O'Connell—"That, Catholics as they were, they took their theology from Rome, but they took their politics from Ireland," and that there was no power on earth—call it by what name they pleased—to sever the allegiance they owed, gave, and meant to continue to give, to the cause of their country and that Protestant Leader, who, in the cause of that country, had proved himself fearless and faithful. The religious cry, when it was revived, was revived by the class to which the hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for Galway belonged; it was revived by the landlords of Ulster; it was revived by that dishonest and desperate class of

men who, when they found that their hold upon the homes and the fruits of the labour of their tenants was gone, and when the legislation of the right hon. Gentleman opposite had taken at least a first step towards a just and equitable and complete redress of the evils under which the people suffered—when they found the power of their exactions gone, again fell back upon the old evil device of bigotry, and lit upon the plains of Ulster the flames of religious hatred. The Irish Party were not open to the charge of religious bigotry. They regarded the claims of no creed. They thought only of the rights of their own country. They desired the union of all classes, and of all creeds of Irishmen; and whatever might be said in that House by some Gentlemen who, like the hon. Member opposite, by trading upon an Irish political cry, had gained an entrance into that House, and had used that entrance and that arena for the purpose of defaming and discrediting those who sent them to it—whatever such hon. Members might say, the Irish Party would be found, through good and evil report, in the days of their effort, and in those days which he believed were near approaching—the days of their deliverance from English Parliamentary control, and the days of the success of their national claims—they would be found to be a Party who, when power and the responsibility which power brought with it were placed in their hands, would have not merely a just, but even a chivalrous regard for the interests, feelings, and even the prejudices of their Protestant fellow-countrymen.

MR. GIBSON said, he should have been content to remain silent that evening and take no part in this debate as to University representation, because he had been quite satisfied with the remarks of those who had presented their views in opposition to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) on the last occasion when the Committee sat; but when the debate had been adjourned, and after the speech which they had just heard, he could hardly remain silent. He was not at all sure that the speeches which had been made were consistent with one another, nor with themselves. No case had been presented to Parliament which was calculated to command its sympathy. He could understand the general question of University representation being fully discussed and thoroughly debated. They had a fair debate upon that question on the last occasion when the Committee sat. Views were presented, of course, upon both sides; and he could understand hon. Members arriving at different conclusions on that important question. For his own part, he did not think it would be fair for him to ask the Committee to extend its attention to him for any lengthened re-opening of the general question; but he could not forbear from saying that he thought, in the new Parliament perhaps more than in the present Parliament, it would be desirable to keep up the representation of the Universities. In a Parliament of 670 Members, surely it was not too much to ask that its dead level of representation should be broken by the interposition of nine University Members—men whose business it was, in addition to representing what they conceived to be the wants of the whole country, to exercise the special function of considering the claims of education, and the needs and requirements of the Professions of the Law, the Church, and Medicine. The great value of such representation had not been seriously questioned in the course of the debate. The hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets, as an able and highly-qualified Gentleman, was entitled to be heard on such a question as a high authority; but he (Mr. Gibson) thought the hon. and learned Member had somewhat magnified a Professoriate, and minimized the quality of a University. Surely in the University there was something wider than the Professoriate. But the hon. and learned Member had suggested that the whole University of Oxford, with which the hon. Member himself was honourably connected, was to be lowered down to the dimensions of a Professoriate. His grievance appeared to be that men as qualified as himself were never returned to represent the Universities. He (Mr. Gibson) was himself disposed to think that the Universities might not be better represented if the views of the hon. and learned Member were adopted. He admitted the high attainments of the hon. and learned Member, and his great qualifications; but he was not sure whether it was not more wise for a University to look outside the Professoriate, and to elect Representatives

from among men who would approach the consideration of questions educationally, professionally, and generally from something of a broader standpoint.

Mr. BRYCE said, the right hon and learned Gentleman seemed to have misunderstood what he had said. He did not say that the constituency ought to be brought down to consist only of residents. He had stated that the residents were too few, and he had spoken of the resident teachers as a whole and the Fellows of the Colleges, and not of the Professors alone, who were in Oxford and Cambridge a much smaller body. Nor had he suggested that Members should be chosen from the teachers

Mr GIBSON said, that explanation did not affect the argument much. The hon. and learned Gentleman had fixed a unit He had said that the Teaching Body was composed of 200 men, and that, in his view, they were entitled to representation. [Mr. BRYCE: No] Whether they were called teachers or Professors or not did not affect his point He felt the same objection if a contrast was to be drawn between lay Members and Professorial Members Indeed, he saw a distinct preference for lay Members, because the Professors would have their business to attend to in the University, and it might be a little difficult for them to attend to their Parliamentary duties in the House of Commons with that close attention which was needed on the part of all who had representative duties to perform, because it might so happen that if Professors were always returned to represent the Universities they would be obliged to fix a time for their lectures more convenient to themselves than to their classes. It was admitted—in fact, the argument could not be addressed, he ventured to think, with anything like dignity to the House of Commons—it was admitted that this was a question that was not to be considered on political grounds—in other words, that it would be unbecoming and unworthy—nay, that it would be mean to deprive the Universities of their representation because a majority of the Representatives had views not in accordance with those which were held by the Party now in power. Everyone admitted that, and there could be no question about it. The hon. and learned Member himself, who presented the Amendment to the House, readily admitted that line, and had based the discussion on the higher platform he Mr. Gibson had indicated. But it was not easy to see what was exactly the platform of the hon Member for the City of Cork (Mr Parnell) in his concise speech. Was it educational? Did the hon. Member agree with the hon. and learned Member who introduced the Amendment to the House—that there should be a Professorial representation? Did he take the ground that politics and religion were to be considered? If he did not take the last ground, he (Mr. Gibson was at a loss to understand the meaning of the whole speech. The hon. Member would hardly like to put it in plain and naked English, and say that he asked for Dublin University to be deprived of its Representatives because those Representatives differed from him in politics, and because they did not hold the creed of the majority of those who followed him. Yet, if that was not his argument, it was difficult to find out the precise ground on which the hon. Member sought for the judgment of the Committee at the present moment. He knew very well the power of the hon. Member in Ireland; but he would venture to say that upon this question, and upon the way in which the hon. Member had presented it, he was not representing either the traditions or the feelings of the Irish people. The Irish people had an intense love for learning. They had an intense respect for institutions that had won fame by their great teaching and intellectual power; and the hon. Member for the City of Cork, speaking of Dublin University, and saying all he could against it, endeavoured to suggest to its disadvantage everything in his power in favour of the Universities of Oxford, and Cambridge, and Scotland. The hon. Member admitted—indeed, he could not deny it—that the University of Dublin had won great fame for its teaching, and for the eminent men it had sent forth. It was known and respected everywhere where education and learning were recognized. He (Mr. Gibson) ventured to think that the contrast the hon. Member had endeavoured to make to the prejudice of Dublin University by a side wind was neither accurate nor fair. He endeavoured to show that the constituency of Dublin University,

which was over 4,000, was much less in proportion to those of the English and Scotch Universities. But in contrasting the constituencies of the Universities the hon. Member coupled those of England and Scotland together in order to give those of England, which had a smaller number, the benefit of the Scotch constituencies, which were very much larger. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The Prime Minister indicated some dissent. The right hon. Gentleman knew Oxford as well as any man; and he (Mr. Gibson) would take that University, and contrast it with the University of Dublin. Surely that was not an unreasonable way of taking up the case of the hon. Member for the City of Cork? Dublin University was only behind the great University of Oxford by something like 1,200 electors; for his right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Plunket) and himself represented a constituency of over 4,000—that was more than 2,000 each; while each Member for Oxford University only represented about 2,600. Take the University of London, which had a constituency of about 2,200, and returned one Member. Where was the wide discrepancy between the two cases?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: The constituency of the University of London is 2,390.

MR. GIBSON said, he had taken the numbers from a Return presented to the House. Surely the difference between 2,000 and 2,390 did not afford that violent contrast on which the strong judgment of the House was asked. The hon. Member for the City of Cork, it was quite true, did not press that matter very much; but the fact that he had mentioned it was an indication of the prejudice with which he had introduced the University of Dublin to the notice of the House. The hon. Member went further, and endeavoured to make it out that Dublin University was possessed of extreme wealth as compared with the great Universities of Oxford and Cambridge; but the hon. Member was altogether wrong. He forgot what was the actual figure at which the hon. Member placed the income of the University of Dublin.

MR. PARNELL: £85,000 per annum is what I stated.

MR. GIBSON said, he did not know whether the hon. Member would be surprised to hear that he was wholly wrong in that matter.

MR. PARNELL: No.

MR. GIBSON: Then the hon. Member was not surprised. As a matter of fact, the income of the University of Dublin, from every source, independent of its fees, which it had honestly earned, and which were not taken into account in calculating the income of Oxford and Cambridge, amounted to £49,000 a-year, all told; and it had to support for that a University and a College, there being no separate income for the College. Everything else that Trinity College enjoyed was obtained from the fees of the students, men who went there to be taught by the Professors and teachers. The figure, therefore, was £49,000 per annum instead of £85,000. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were worth, as private property, independently of fees, much more than £360,000 a-year. This was a tremendous contrast, and a very different one from that suggested by the hon. Member. It was three times as high as the statement of the hon. Member. He should not have thought it necessary to mention these facts if the hon. Member had not referred to them. He admitted that they were altogether irrelevant to the discussion in reference to the propriety of keeping up the representation of the Universities; but as they had been mentioned with a view to prejudicing the University of Dublin he was bound to offer a reply. The hon. Member also spoke of what he described as wholesale confiscation, and implied that the whole of the income of the University was the result of confiscation. That was not the case; but a substantial part of the income of Dublin University —£10,000 a-year—arose from private endowments.

MR. PARNELL: I said the landed property amounted to £31,000 a-year.

MR. GIBSON said, he would beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon; he thought the hon. Member had made a wider statement. He should like to ask, looking at the question from its fair and logical standpoint, what were the grounds upon which the House was asked to say that Dublin University should be deprived of its representation? Had any ground been urged, except that its Members were not of the same politics as the hon. Member for the City of

Cork, and his followers? Had any ground been urged except a personal and sectarian one? There was a fallacy running through the arguments of the hon. Members for the City of Cork, Mr. Parnell and Sligo (Mr. Sexton). They had over and over again used the expression—"You are giving Dublin University representation." That was not the position at all, nor was it any part of the object of the Bill. Dublin University had had representation since the time of James I., and the question was whether it was now to be deprived of representation. They were asked, notwithstanding the tremendous anxiety of the position now before Ireland, to deprive the University of Dublin of those Members who were able to express views that were most needful to be presented in future debates. The hon. Member for the City of Cork said that the University of Dublin was a close institution, and that its doors were not open to the bulk of the people. Was ever such an argument used before by anyone acquainted with the history of that great seat of learning? Since before the Union Roman Catholics had been in the habit of going there without any attempt whatever being made to interfere with their faith. It was the proud boast of Dublin University that before any other University in the United Kingdom she freely opened her doors and allowed Roman Catholics to enter, and the institution could be used by Roman Catholics and Dissenters as much as by any member of the Church to which he himself belonged. Since the passing of what was honourably known as "Fawcett's Act" all who came there were welcomed, no matter what their creed or politics were. All were at liberty to win the Scholarships and present themselves for the Fellowship of the University. Every single prize was open. All were freely welcomed, and it would not be worthy of the name of University if the welcome were halting or grudging. Some of the highest and most valued prizes had been carried off by Roman Catholics, and some by Dissenters. Let them look at the history of the country since the foundation of the University of Dublin. The University had given a splendid education to some of the greatest men who had illustrated the history of Ireland. Burke was a scholar of the University; Goldsmith had a statue erected to his memory before the institution in which he was educated; the late Isaac Butt was a Professor of the University. On every occasion when great and distinguished men went there everything else was forgotten, except the desire to give them a worthy and honourable welcome. When the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, not a very long time ago, paid a visit to Dublin University, every Fellow, scholar, and student joined together with pride and gratification to give welcome to a man who they felt was as eminent in public life as he was distinguished in his University career. The real objection to continuing representation to the University of Dublin was that the Representatives of the University were not numbered among the supporters of the hon. Member for the City of Cork. Was that the ground upon which it was sought to disfranchise and leave unrepresented a large and influential class, whose interests were bound up in such an institution as Dublin University? The hon. Member for Sligo was more open and less wary than the hon. Member for the City of Cork; and he, more than once, in the earlier part of his speech, used arguments that were addressed pointedly to sectarian bigotry. As political ground had been introduced into this matter, he should like to say a word or two upon it, although he admitted that it was not a ground which should be allowed to enter into the consideration and discussion of the question. The Loyalist minority in Ireland, if they were in such a condition that they would be able to secure adequate representation, would be entitled to very nearly one-third of the representation of the country. Under the new conditions, and under the Bill now passing through Committee, the Loyalist minority was not likely to obtain one-fifth of the representation. In three Provinces of Ireland a stupendous change would have to be considered. Except in Dublin University, and possibly in Dublin City and County, the Loyalist minority would have no representation; and it was under those circumstances, and under that stupendous state of facts, that the hon. Member for the City of Cork thought it statesmanlike, thought it reasonable, thought it something that would show that he understood the responsibility of the great

position and power which he now claimed to possess, to deprive these three Provinces of the chance of having their views represented by such utterances as were likely to be made by the Members for the University of Dublin. At all events, the Loyalists in Ireland would have in future an anxious and arduous time. Was it not reasonable, he asked, on the grounds of fair play, of sentiment, and of common justice, that a minority—if they liked, a hopeless minority—should have some voice, however feeble, if not in fighting their battle, at all events to state their case, and represent their grievances? The hon. Member for the City of Cork knew that as well as anyone in the House of Commons; and yet, knowing how needful it was in their own interests that those who would otherwise be constitutionally silenced should have some kind of outlet, at any rate, for presenting their Petitions to Parliament, and obtaining the public opinion of the Empire, he sought to prevent that, and yet asked the Committee to believe that he was desirous of having a fair representation of the public opinion of Ireland. He repeated again that the House of Commons had nothing to do with the consideration whether the Universities should have Representatives who supported one particular line of politics, and the question ought to be placed upon a more worthy basis. He would not stop to consider it from a personal standpoint; but he contended that whatever might be the wishes, or desires, or efforts of the hon. Member for the City of Cork and his Friends, it would be unworthy of Parliament if they did not leave the Loyalist minority some voice, however weak, by which they would be able to present their side of the question. He could not, of course, discuss personal matters. The hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Sexton), in the course of his able speech, made some personal observations as to the way in which the Dublin University was now represented. He must pass that matter by. Members for the University must be satisfied to leave their public actions to the public judgment of those before whom they appeared. But he must say this of the University of Dublin—that it had in a long and honourable career not forgotten its great duties, or the claims of education entrusted to its charge, and that it had ever since it had representation in Parliament endeavoured to show itself not unworthy of the high trust which had been reposed in it. Before the Union it returned men who, in the Parliament of Ireland, held no unworthy place. The hon. Member for the City of Cork recently in Ireland said that his idea of a Parliament was the Grattan Parliament. The Grattan Parliament had among its most distinguished Members the Representatives of the University of Dublin; and now they knew that the hon. Member's idea of a Parliament was the Grattan Parliament, shorn of one of the greatest ornaments of that period. Since the Union the Committee knew what the representation of the University had been. It was not for him to speak of it. Of course, he himself belonged to a Party. It was very hard, indeed, for any man in Ireland not to belong to a Party; but he claimed this for himself—that although he was true to his principles, and trusted that he should never be false to his Party, he had ever striven, and should ever strive, to take a fair, honourable, and reasonable view of the needs and requirements of his native country. There was something far above Party; and that was a conviction of what was best for one's country. In his humble way—sometimes, perhaps, mistakenly, sometimes even in a way to give offence, but never intentionally so—he had striven to act up to what he believed to be his conscientious duty. He had ever sought, and should ever strive, to find in the circumstances of Ireland occasion and opportunities for neutral platforms, upon which Irishmen might meet to consider the common needs of their common country. He wished there were more such opportunities afforded in Ireland. They had had enough of bitterness, enough of Party animosity, enough of sharp criticism of one another; and he trusted the time would never come when Irishmen would not strive to rise above what were the mere suggestions of Party and remember the needs of their country. He was aware that that Party to which he belonged were a minority in Ireland. In the future they might be in a great minority; but he thought he was entitled to ask anyone who fairly considered this question, who desired to consider what

was fair and just to all parties in Ireland, to say this—that it would not be reasonable, that it would not be fair, that it would not be just—nay, that it would be in the highest degree unreasonable, to the highest degree unfair, and in the highest degree unjust, at this, of all times, to deprive the University of Dublin of its representation.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN said, there were men in that House who remembered the late Morgan John O'Connell, formerly M.P. for Kerry, who had taken the first gold medal in his year at Dublin University. He might run through a long list of men who, like the late Lord Justice Deasy, Mr. Dillon, the late Member for Tipperary, Mr. Cogan, lately a Member of that House, the present Chief Justice Morris, the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. Synan), and others, all receiving the highest distinction at that University. He, in common with those men, recollected that, at a time when they had no educational refuge in Ireland, an opportunity of finding one was accorded to them within the hospitable walls of the University; and he cared not whether its original constitution was founded on confiscation or in rapine. In his time it afforded Irish Catholics an education not open to them elsewhere; and he knew that, in those times, the position of things in that University was such as he had stated. It was their own fault if they had not taken advantage of that education. The men he had alluded to had done honour to themselves and to the University; and it was because the position of that University was at present under discussion that he ventured to offer these few remarks to the Committee. He had heard the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and that of his hon. Friend the Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry), who took up the hon. Member for the City of Cork rather sharply, but not, he should say, more sharply than he deserved, were it not that he knew that the hon. Member for the City of Cork received his education in an English University, and therefore could not be supposed to know, except from hearsay, those circumstances to which he alluded in his speech. For his own part, he (Sir Patrick O'Brien) could say that for some 45 years past he had known that University personally; and within that period he had never known a man so far forgetful of what he owed to his family, not to say his God and his religion, as to sacrifice, for the miserable pittance of an Irish Scholarship, the faith that was in him. He had heard that persons had so far forgotten themselves as to behave in the manner alluded to by the hon. Member for the City of Cork. He could assure the Committee that he had communicated with as many Members of Dublin University as most hon. Gentlemen in that House; and he was informed that the occasions on which that had occurred could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Many of the observations of the hon. Member for the City of Cork he fully concurred with; but then, with all deference to him, he did not think that the question as to what ought to be the University education of the Irish people in the future was one which they had now to consider. Many of them held houses and land; houses and land were good things; but they were not everything. Although they might confer the franchise, there were other things which would be much required when the new Franchise Act came into operation—namely, knowledge and discretion. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) said he was a Party man and a politician. Well, he (Sir Patrick O'Brien) did not know any man who could lead a public life in Ireland and say he was not a politician. He had heard that a man's politics was his anxiety to serve his country, his policy his anxiety to serve himself. He left policy to other men to deal with, imputing to no one what certainly did not concern either the right hon. and learned Gentleman or himself. One word with regard to the Representatives of the University of Dublin. It had been said in the course of the discussion that the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen the Members for the University were uneasy about their seats. He believed that the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen, of whom he had had a long personal knowledge, possessed the main requisites of Members of Parliament—that was to say, high personal character and great intellectual capacity. He cared not to what constituency those right hon. and learned Gentlemen presented themselves; they would be accepted,

because those who listened to them would feel that they would abide by the profession of opinion which they made. It was to men of that kind that they looked to as the Representatives of the great interests of learning who would defend them at the next General Election. He regretted, in common with the hon. Member for the City of Cork, that there did not exist in Ireland now an University which the Catholic people of that country could conscientiously enter. The heads of their Church had struggled for it for a long time; and he would not join in any jealousy against hon. Gentlemen opposite for having received charge of that subject when others had failed to bring it to the front. In 1873 some settlement might have been made, perhaps, in reference to the University Question more in accordance with public and, might he add, with the ecclesiastical opinion of the present day than it had since been the case. He had been sent to Parliament directly pledged on that question; and, perhaps, he was so strictly pledged from the knowledge that he had received his education in Dublin University. That pledge had made him set aside his own private opinions upon the measure under consideration, and he had voted in accordance with the opinions of those who sent him against the Bill then proposed; but now many a year had elapsed, and he was there fearlessly to say in the House of Commons that it was a bad day for the Catholics of Ireland when they did not accept that Bill which he had, with others, assisted in throwing out in 1873, because since then the subject had been left the plaything of every Party and section that looked for political advancement at a time when there ought to have been a junction of men of all classes of religion in Ireland, irrespective of ideas of a political character, to join in carrying forward the great question. There were no Irish Gentlemen on his side of the House, he believed, who would be unprepared to give to the hon. Member for the City of Cork, when he brought forward his measure, all the assistance that it was competent for them to give. Even in the days before Mr. Fawcett's arrangement was carried, there was one thing which Dublin University did for the poorer class in Ireland; to the humblest even of the peasant class who could find means to go to Dublin and present themselves within the walls of the College, it gave sizarships, free lectures, free commons, and free residence; and as a patriotic man in that House he should be forgetful of his duty on behalf of his poorer fellow-countrymen did he not bear his testimony to the conduct of the University in that regard. No doubt they had had confiscation in Ireland; but had there been no confiscation in England? Who founded Christ Church at Oxford? Would any hon. Gentleman tell the Committee that the rents and endowments of that College had been administered in accordance with the wishes of its founder. The University was founded in the days of Queen Elizabeth, in the days when there was no toleration, in the days of Penal Laws, in the days of tyranny, practised in his country, and on the Irish race. But the times were changed in Ireland from the days when, as he had once heard, the hon. Member for the City of Cork say his ancestor crossed the Boyne with William; a time when the Irish people suffered and had not Representatives in that House. Had they not the right to say that, owing to whatever circumstances, things were changed in Ireland, and that Irish Representatives could stand in that House on an equality with all men, even those of other Universities, and speak upon the question at present under consideration? For his own part, he would never consider that the spirit of toleration had been altogether absent from the University of Dublin, for it had given them a Bishop in Berkeley, a poet in Goldsmith, and one of the most brilliant statesmen in the world in Edmund Burke.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the hon. Baronet who had just sat down (Sir Patrick O'Brien) had denied the statement of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), which had been reiterated by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), that Scholarships were only given at Trinity College to Catholics on their consenting to forego their faith. He Mr. T. P. O'Connor met that argument by saying—and the hon. Baronet might take the observation in what sense he pleased—that in Ireland, unfortunately, they were only too well acquainted with both political and religious apostates. His hon. Friend found fault with some of the figures of

the hon. Member for the City of Cork. The unfortunate thing about the revenues of Trinity College was that some had been able to make out what they really were, and that would be brought to the case when a full and detailed account was published. He had listened with great attention to the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr Gibson), and he had always observed that when the right hon. and learned Gentleman had a very bad case he spoke in a very loud tone of voice, and the speech which he had delivered a short time ago was, he thought, a proof of the correctness of that observation. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was so hard up for arguments that he said it was because Trinity College had given a friendly reception to the Prime Minister that it must retain its two Members. There never was an argument more perverse. Then he said that there should be in the House of Commons some Representatives of Education. He (Mr T. P. O'Connor) ventured to say that the right hon. Gentleman opposite Sir Lyon Playfair, who spoke for one of the Scotch Universities, was the sole Representative of Education in the House. They all admired the oratorical abilities of the two Members for Dublin University, but when came to their claim to be a section of Educational Representatives, why the right hon. and learned Gentlemen themselves would, he was satisfied, be the first to dissent from such a claim being made in their behalf. He found that the most eminent literary men in that House were entirely ignored from the representation of Universities. The hon. and learned Gentleman who proposed this Amendment (Mr Bryce) himself was a University Professor, as was also the Successor of Professor Mr Lankester. Both were very eminent Representatives of Education, and yet neither of these Gentlemen would by any chance obtain the representation of an English University. In fact the four hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who represented English Universities were less Representatives of Education than any Members of that House. Therefore, he said that this argument would not bear one moment's investigation. It had been said also that the right hon. and learned Gentlemen the Members for the University of Dublin represented the "Loyal minority" in Ireland, but he was surprised that no reply had been made to that argument from the Treasury Bench. He would advise some hon. Gentleman who had been speaking on behalf of the "Loyal minority" in Ireland to read the speech of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War. On a former occasion the noble Marquess, in reply to the very same argument when it was raised in connection with the Franchise Bill, said that the Representatives of the Loyal minority in Ireland must place reliance upon the Representatives of the same class in England and Scotland. Who doubted that if any attempt were made to interfere with the religious or political rights of the Loyal minority in Ireland, so called, although he did not admit the term, would meet with the resistance of the large majority in that House, and that English and Scotch Members would assist in rejecting any such proposal? Therefore, he said that this argument was also absurd. Did the occupants of the Treasury Bench think that these two seats should be maintained for the purpose of the representation of the "Loyal minority" in Ireland? Because, if that was not the opinion of the Government, they would not have to answer the question as to what provision they had made for the representation of the Irish minority in England and Scotland, which numbered 2,000,000. To the 1,000,000 of the "Loyal minority" they had given seats varying, as estimated, from 17 to 27; and he would like to know how many seats had the Irish minority in England and Scotland reserved under the Redistribution of Seats Bill? For those 2,000,000, the majority of whom were Catholic, they had given one Catholic Representative. He could scarcely congratulate them on that, for this one Representative was of such a milk-and-water kind that he could hardly regard him as a Representative at all. He would like some answer from the Treasury Bench as to this argument. He thought it simply scandalous that this matter should be allowed to remain in its present position. The reason of that was that this Bill which was said to be a compromise was a sham compromise after all, in which all the concessions were given to the minority at the expense of the majority. Not only was that the case in respect of

Dublin University, but the Government had managed to give the so-called Loyal minority in Ireland a far greater amount of representation than they were entitled to. He said, with regard to the action of the Government in that respect, that it was only part of their generally mistaken policy in Ireland; and he believed that as long as they continued to concede to the "Loyal minority" in Ireland what they denied to the rest of the population, they would in that country always be in a minority themselves, instead of in a majority; as long as that course was pursued the majority would be disloyal, and the minority only "loyal." He impressed on the Government that they should bear this in mind, and he looked forward anxiously to the time when the question of the English constituencies should be raised, to see whether the right hon. Gentleman would be willing to treat the Irish minority in England and Scotland in the same lavish and generous way as he had treated the so-called Loyal minority in Ireland.

MR. MACARTNEY said, the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had treated the Committee to a repetition of an assertion frequently made in that House, which might impose on English Members who were not conversant with the actual facts with regard to Ireland. The hon. Gentleman had stated that the Loyal minority in Ireland numbered about 1,000,000. If that were the case, the population of Ireland being about 5,000,000, the proportion of it represented by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on that side would be more than as four to one. Now, the proportion arithmetically was as five to one, as near as it could be—that was to say, the Protestant, which he considered to be the Loyal population, was two-sevenths of the whole population. If they took the number of Members which Ireland had originally, there would be 105 Members, two-sevenths of which number was 30; one-seventh was 15; and he was extremely sorry to say that the Bill before the Committee, instead of giving to the Irish Loyalists two-sevenths of the representation which they were entitled to, were only to have one-seventh. And yet hon. Members below the Gangway, who talked of liberality, and described the Bill as a sham compromise, which gave the advantage to the minority in Ireland at the expense of the majority, actually grudged that minority those 15 Members, which, when they came to another stage of the Bill, he (Mr. Macartney) should be in a position to prove was the extent of the representation they would have. He was not now in a position to prove it at that moment; but he should do so on the occasion referred to, and on the hustings at the next General Election. He asserted that the very closest possible calculation, made with the greatest anxiety to ascertain what would be the representation they would have for the defence of their lives and liberties, gave the number of Members as 15. That number included the two Members below him—two right hon. and learned Gentlemen who, with such credit to themselves and to the country, and with such honour to that House, represented the University of Dublin. He certainly did not think it too much that the considerable Protestant population of Dublin, and of the Provinces of Ulster, Munster, and Connaught, should be represented by 15 Members; but if the two seats for the Dublin University were to be taken away, they would be left with 13 Members only out of 103 for the whole of Ireland. The Government would hear a great deal more on this subject before the discussion was finished. It had been asserted by the hon. and learned Member yesterday on the opposite Benches (Mr. Bryce) that the representation of Universities was mischievous to the interest of the Universities themselves, because it produced bitter political feeling. He (Mr. Macartney) had not the honour of having been educated at the University of Dublin—he was educated at a German University that had no Parliamentary representation; and he did not believe that in any country in the world was stronger political feeling shown than in that University. It was the same with all foreign countries. At Bohn the students were divided into circles; each district had its own band of students, who wore a distinct badge and cap, and when these met they always fought. Therefore, he said that non-representation in the case of Universities did nothing whatever towards preventing strong political feelings amongst the students. It was the case all over the Continent, as he had stated, and he did

not believe there was any country in the world in which political and religious feeling ran higher than in Ireland.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, that subjects had been brought forward by some hon. Members that evening in the discussion which, in his opinion, ought not to have been introduced into it. The hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) had tried to make out that hon. Gentlemen on these Benches were opposing the representation of Dublin University, because of the bigoted motives they might have against the representation of Protestants at all. He said, in the course of his speech, that Questions were being asked every day in the House with reference to the religion of officials and other persons in Ireland, and that it was a fact that went to prove that the Irish Members were anxious to open up again questions of religious sentiment. The hon. Member must know very well that the object hon. Gentlemen on the Irish Benches had in alluding to the religion of persons in Ireland was not that they had any bigoted objection to Protestants holding positions at all, but that they were desirous that Catholics, who were in the great majority, should have a fair amount of representation and a fair amount of the positions of authority in that country. He did not think it was fair for the hon. Member for the County of Galway to impute to the Irish Members that they were actuated by bigotry because they had put Questions from time to time in this House about the religion of certain Irish officials. They did not object to Protestants having a fair amount of all that was good going on in Ireland, but they certainly did object to what was undoubtedly very frequently the case in many parts of Ireland, namely, that where the population was Catholic the majority of the positions of influence and authority were held by Protestants. Another point to which he wished to call the attention of the Committee was this. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson) had said, in his very florid speech, in answer to the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), that the figures which the hon. Member had given with reference to Dublin University were not at all correct. Well, he (Mr. William Redmond) had in his hand a statistical history of the University of Dublin, by Mr. Dennis Corfield Heron, B.A., of Trinity College, Dublin. In that book it was stated that the total income of the University was £80,000. Mr. Dennis Corfield Heron might very well be taken as an authority on this matter, and though no one would be disposed to dispute the fact that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University was also an authority on University matters, still he thought that Mr. Heron's statement that the income of the University was £80,000 might very well be placed against the contradictory statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. It was the greatest mistake for hon. Members to endeavour to make it appear that in opposing the representation of the Dublin University, the Irish Members were opposing the representation of the Protestants of Ireland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin had spoken as if he thought that if the two seats were taken from Dublin University the Loyal minority in Ireland would be without any representation in the House at all. Of course, it was easy enough to believe that the Loyal minority in Ireland valued very highly representation by two such right hon. and learned Gentlemen as the present Members for the University of Dublin. Yet, it would be difficult to prove that if Parliament were ridded of the services of these two right hon. and learned Gentlemen, the Loyal minority would be altogether without representation. Outside the representation of Dublin University, the North of Ireland would send to this House a very ample number of hon. Gentlemen to represent the interests of the Protestants. Therefore, it was not because the majority of the electors of the University were Protestants that the Irish Members objected to the representation of the University. They objected to this representation upon many other grounds. They objected to it on the ground that had been stated by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), because the University was practically closed to the great majority of the Irish people. It was all very well for hon. Members like the hon. Member for the County of Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) to say that the University was open to Catholics; but he (Mr. William Red-

mond) challenged a denial of this statement—namely, that the great majority of Irish parents who were in a position to send their children to a University would be found to object altogether to sending their children to Dublin University.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, the hon. Member (Mr. William Redmond) had quite mis-stated what he had said. He had never said one word about the University of Dublin being open to Catholics. On the contrary, his argument was that Catholics were deprived of the best facilities for higher education, through not having a proper means of education of their own.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he was very sorry to have misinterpreted the words of the hon. Member; but he had understood him to say that there were obstacles in the way of Catholics obtaining prizes at Trinity College. The hon. Member for the County of Galway denied it; but, anyhow, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dublin University (Mr. Gibson) certainly had made a very great point of that. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had declared that Dublin University was practically open to Catholics; but that was not the fact. Dublin University was practically shut to Catholics; and he would draw attention to the fact, that every one of the great and eminent Irishmen cited as having received education in the University of Dublin were, as a matter of fact, Protestant Irishmen. Goldsmith, for instance, was a Protestant Irishman, as also was Burke—two men who had been conspicuously mentioned in the course of this debate. No doubt, it was a fact that some eminent Catholics had received education at Trinity College; but the fact remained that the vast majority of the people of Ireland, being Catholics, did not receive from Dublin University that consideration and those advantages which they should receive, as the majority of the people of England received from the English Universities. Upon the ground that Dublin University was opposed to the natural aspirations of the majority of the people of Ireland, and that it was opposed to the religious aspirations of the majority, and upon the ground that it did not sympathize in any degree with the feelings of the people, and that it did not enjoy the confidence of the Catholic population or of the Catholic clergy, the Irish Members objected to the monstrous absurdity of allowing it to be represented in Parliament by two Members. The hon. Member for the County of Galway had, he believed, referred to a statement of his (Mr. William Redmond's) the other night in the House, when he had been endeavouring to make a few observations on this subject. The hon. Member attributed to him the assertion that neither learning nor wealth should have any weight whatever for a Parliamentary qualification. He (Mr. William Redmond) was sorry to see that this was reported in several of the London newspapers as his statement on that occasion. Such was not at all a correct representation of what he had intended to say. What he had desired to convey was, that he did not think that the fact of great wealth or vast learning should have any special advantages in the franchise at all. He was of opinion—and he believed that the great majority of the Irish people and their Representatives were also of opinion—that a man who was a peasant in Ireland had as good a right to vote for the Rulers of his country, and had as good an idea as to those who would best rule his country, and what would be best for his country, as any gentleman in Dublin University who might be steeped up to the teeth in a knowledge of the classics and University education. The Irish Members did not want to exclude wealth; they did not want to exclude learning; but what they said was—"Do not give these qualifications special advantages." He, of course, hoped that the day might very soon come when there would be a broad scheme introduced into the House to give to every male citizen, not only in Ireland but in this country, a right to vote; but until that time came he should say—"Do not give to a few thousand men within the walls of Dublin University, simply because they are very learned, the power of sending Representatives to speak in this House." If they were going to give persons representation because of their learning, why did they not give representation to the professional classes? Why should they not give doctors and lawyers, and men of the learned Professions, representation? They should give these gentlemen special representation if they

gave such representation to the gentlemen who had a special knowledge of the classics. He objected altogether to the idea of University education. As he had been unable to complete his speech the other night, he would take this opportunity of entering a strong protest against the idea of having two Members to represent this utterly foreign institution in Dublin. There was no disposition on the part of the Irish Members to deny the fact that Dublin University had returned many Irishmen who had been a credit to their country. He gave the University that credit. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had pointed out that he believed in many respects Dublin University was the first University in the world. It was distinguished, and the Irish Members did not deny it; but what they also asserted was that it was foreign, and not in accordance with the ideas of the Irish people. If the Irish people could have a University given to them in accordance with their ideas, however much less famous than the present University it might be, it would meet with their approval. He could not close his remarks upon this subject without referring, very briefly, to the language in which the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury had interrupted him the other night when he was endeavouring to perform his legitimate duty towards the people he represented, in speaking upon this question. The right hon. Gentleman had practically asserted that he (Mr. William Redmond) was speaking too often in this House. In answer to that, he might say that the right hon. Gentleman himself spoke so very seldom that he could quite understand how easily he could become intoxicated with the exuberance of somebody else's verbosity. But he (Mr. William Redmond) must beg leave to assure the right hon. Gentleman that, much as he would like to curtail his utterances, still he was bound to remember that he was sent to the House not to please the right hon. Gentleman or anyone else, but to give expression to the views of the people he represented, and, certainly, to give expression to those views he should continue to do so long as he had the honour to sit in the House.

COLONEL COLTHURST said, the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had been obliged to bring this question forward in a manner which was not very convenient to the Committee—that was to say, on the general question of University representation. He (Colonel Colthurst) could not support the view that the Dublin University, distinguished as it was and represented as it was by distinguished men, was a sufficient representation or a true representation of University life in Ireland. But there was another way in which this inequality might be redressed. There was another University in Ireland with regard to which he had been sorry to hear the hon. Member for the City of Cork—he thought upon very imperfect information—speak in very disparaging terms. The Royal University was not the solution of the educational difficulty asked for by the Catholic people in Ireland, or those who were their guides in such matters; but, nevertheless, it was accepted by the Catholic hierarchy of Ireland as, at any rate, an honest attempt to give equality; and it contained within itself—and he believed that was the opinion entertained by those who were responsible for this question in Ireland—if properly developed, the elements of a fair and equitable settlement. ("No, no!") Well, at any rate, the question was an open one. Upon the Senate of that University were three Catholic Prelates—at least, there were three before the death of the late Cardinal McCabe, the two remaining Prelates upon it being the Bishops of Ardagh and Clonfert, with at least two other distinguished ecclesiastics. The vast majority of students were Catholics, and he, for one, as an Irish Catholic was proud to testify that that University had given a good education to a large number of Catholics who were desirous of a University education, and who, when they had the means of partaking of it without violating their religious convictions, had shown that, coming as they did almost entirely from unendowed institutions, they could hold their own in the educational race with others who had greater facilities for culture. He did not accuse the hon. Member for the City of Cork with having intentionally disparaged this University. The hon. Member, he thought, must have forgotten the facts at the time, or must have been speaking upon imperfect information. He was

sure the hon. Member did not want to do an injustice to the Royal University; but his observations, if they had been left unanswered, would have unjustly disparaged the University in this House. There were many reforms necessary in the University; and, above all, money was greatly required, the institution being imperfectly endowed. He should like, if there was any chance of making an alteration in the Bill—which he very much doubted—to see an attempt made, not to level down in this instance, but to level up. He should like to see Parliament either give two Members to the Royal University, or transfer one to it from the Dublin University. He supposed, however, that after all this was only an academic discussion, and that the matter would in the end rest where it now stood. He had not been intrusted with the care of this question by anyone; but he believed he spoke the sentiments of a large number of Catholics on the subject, when he said that the present Royal University in itself, when properly developed and when properly endowed, as it would be, he hoped, before long, would be a fair and impartial settlement of the University difficulty in Ireland.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, his hon. and gallant Friend who had just spoken (Colonel Colthurst), and who had said something in defence or in panegyric of the Royal University in Ireland, would, he thought, find it very hard to make out more than one substantial fact in favour of that University. The existence and working of the University had undoubtedly shown, as the hon. and gallant Member had said, a strong desire for education on the part of the immense majority of the Irish people. They had shown that in a most convincing manner; but they had also shown that, under that system, the Irish majority were not able to get it on fair terms. However, they were not at present discussing the claims or the merits of the Royal University of Ireland. The question that the Committee had to consider was not whether the University of Dublin in particular, but whether the Universities of the United Kingdom in general, were entitled to representation. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had complained to-night of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), because, as he said, the hon. Member had narrowed and brought down the scope of the whole discussion. Well, he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself might be justly accused of having not only lowered and narrowed, but positively degraded, the character of this great controversy, because, as he had put it before the Committee, his one main argument for the representation of the University of Dublin was that thereby a voice was found for a certain small section of what were called the Irish Loyalists in this House. Now, he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) should hardly have believed that any right hon. and learned Gentleman representing a great and learned Body, would have thought, even for the sake of argument and controversy, of bringing the question of the representation of the University down to that narrow and miserable issue. It would seem, according to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, that the one only claim to be made by the Dublin University was, that if they took from the University its representation they would leave certain Ulster Loyalists with no one to speak for them in the House. He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) did not believe that this would be the consequence of depriving the University of its Representatives. He believed that the Ulster people, or those of them who were of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's way of thinking, would have in this House, under any circumstances, a representation quite in proportion to their numbers. But the right hon. and learned Gentleman remarked that no one had gone to-night into the general question, or had touched the main issue, whether the Universities ought or ought not to have representation. He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) proposed, in a few words, to touch upon that question. He was ready to maintain that the Universities were not entitled to representation in the House of Commons. He was very much surprised to hear representation in this House talked of as a sort of reward—as a sort of Montyon Prize given to deserving Universities. He wished to ask what connection there was in the least between representation in this House and the discharge of great and important educational functions like those of the Universities of this country?

By requiring Universities to return Members to Parliament, they were putting upon them a task for which they were not fitted, for which they were not qualified, which interfered with the discharge of their other functions, which very often degraded them and brought them under the influence of wire pullers, factions, ward meetings, caucuses, and other institutions which, however useful and indispensable they might be in the matter of Parliamentary elections, had nothing to do with the calmer atmosphere of education and high culture. He thought that, instead of looking to the Parliamentary representation as a prize, the Universities might rather claim, as a reward for the educational services they performed, to be exempted from these disturbing political duties, which in no wise assisted their functions as teachers. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the County of Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) had talked to-night of the lack of respect for culture shown by the Committee in its reluctance to concede representation to all Universities in the House of Commons. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think that culture was only of one kind, and that that was the academic form of culture given in the Colleges. But, if the principle that culture was to have special representation in the House of Commons was admitted, he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) wished to know why should not the members of the Royal Academy be represented? Why should not also the members of the Royal Academy of Music have someone to speak for them in Parliament? Why should the British Museum be wholly unrepresented? Why should not, as the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. William Redmond) had asked, the learned Professions have special representation? They were told that our system of representation was so monotonous that we needed something specially exceptional to vary it. But let them test that by an examination of the facts. What variety had the English Universities brought into the representation of that House? There was not at the present moment a single hon. Member sitting for an English University who had not been in the House for years before that University sought his services. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Raikes) who sat near him had resigned a very important constituency in order that he might represent the University of Cambridge. This right hon. Gentleman had not, therefore, imported any variety into the representation of the House; and if they went over all the Members who represented English Universities in this House, they would find that not one of them owed his seat to the University he now represented; not one of them had had his merits discovered by the University. He quite admitted that there were University Members in the House who were first brought into political life by being chosen to represent their Universities. There was, for example, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Universities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen (Sir Lyon Playfair). He had come into the House first, if he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) were not mistaken, to represent these two Universities. But would anyone, knowing the right hon. Gentleman's accomplishments and talents, say that he could possibly have long waited for an opportunity of entering upon a Parliamentary career, even if there had been no Parliamentary representation for the Universities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen? Then take the hon. Baronet who represented the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). Everyone knew that he was one of the best qualified men to speak on behalf of Universities and for University education; but, then, he was in the House for years and years before the University of London had a chance of finding out his merits. He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) admitted that in the case of both of the right hon. and learned Gentlemen who represented the University of Dublin, they had come into Parliamentary and public life for the first time on the introduction of that University; but he thought that no one who had seen as much of them as hon. Members had in the House, could have the slightest doubt that some constituency in their own country sharing their opinions would have found a place for them in Parliament. He must say that he, for one, should be very sorry if, owing to any changes, the House were to be deprived of the services of these right hon. and learned Gentlemen. He did not often agree with either of them; hardly ever did it happen that he could agree with either of them in any public expression

of opinion; but he was quite free to say, and glad to say, that he thought the average of Parliament, intellectually and rhetorically, would be considerably lowered if they had not these right hon. and learned Gentlemen amongst them. At the same time, he must say that if the function of representing a University were to perform some mystic duties on behalf of science and culture, he did not think the qualifications of these right hon. and learned Gentlemen especially fitted them for the task. If there were in the House two born political partizans, it was these two; and he did not remember one occasion upon which the voice of either had been raised on a question of mere culture. He had no doubt that if Dublin University were disfranchised, these right hon. and learned Gentlemen would both find constituencies in Ireland ready and willing to return them. Then as regarded this special representation of the Dublin University, he maintained that it was an exceptional case. The man who was most jealous—if there were anyone jealous—of the claims and position of the English Universities, must admit that, at any rate, these institutions did represent most faithfully the best intellectual life of the English people. They sprang from the heart's core of the English people; their history was interwoven with the history of the country; they were as directly English and national as the genius of man could make such institutions. Of the Scotch Universities, also, he could bear hearty witness to the most admirable, useful, and truly national work which they performed. They represented, to the highest degree, the intellectual life of Scotland. They made their influence felt even more than the English Universities—down, in fact, to the humblest class of Scotchmen. If, then, there was an exceptional case to be made out, he maintained that the English and Scotch Universities were justly entitled to have their claim recognized. But look at the position of the Dublin University. As the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) told them, it had nothing to do with the national life of the country. It was an exotic altogether, doing most admirable work, no doubt, for those it brought up and taught. He had not a word to say against the work the Dublin University was doing, or against those who were connected with its teaching; but the great majority of the Irish people could not accept its teaching. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Dublin University (Mr. Gibson) to-night had complained of the Irish Catholics saying that they could not take advantage of the teaching of that University. But surely no one could know better than the right hon. and learned Gentleman that the religious principles of the majority of the Irish people prevented them from accepting the teaching of the Dublin University. How, then, could the University be called a national institution, when in its essential principles it was opposed to the views of the majority of the people? Look at the position taken by some of the great Universities of Germany. Look at the way in which they kept alive, even in the most difficult and trying times, the courage and the national feeling of the people. Look at the work done by the Universities of Spain, and, more lately, Greece—of Athens especially. These were all national institutions. Sharing, as they did, in every movement of the life of the nation, they might be said to be entitled to special representation if their countries had special representation to bestow upon them. But he denied that a seat in this House was an honour which any University did well to claim, or from which it derived any benefit. Whether the question were taken on that ground alone, or on the ground of the special circumstances of the Irish University, he should say that Trinity College had no claim. It was an institution having no national title to the admiration of the people, more than the admiration they might give to culture of every kind; and he was of opinion that the House of Commons was not at liberty to go out of its way to endow it any longer with special Parliamentary privilege.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, he should like, before this discussion closed, to say a few words upon the subject now before the Committee. He confessed that he was pleased the other night at hearing the very able speech of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Albert Grey), who had put forward as his plea for opposing the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr.

Bryce, that the representation of our Universities was, as it were, the redeeming point in the dead level of representation which they were now called upon to adopt. He must say, looking at the part which the hon. Member's illustrious ancestor—the great Reformer, Lord Grey—took in connection with the Reform Bill of 1832, he must say, without compliment to the hon. Gentleman, that he worthily represented the great name he bore. Now, with regard to the matter before the Committee, he could not help feeling, looking through the whole of their representative history, that the present proposal was a departure entirely from that which had always adorned and distinguished our representative system. He need not go back so far as that early history of our country, when we found, by the Parliamentary Records of Prynne, that as early as the time of King Edward I. writs were directed to Oxford and Cambridge to send men discreet and learned in the law to represent the Republic of Letters in this House of Commons. But, later than that, they found that in the time of King James I. not only did the King by Charter call on the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to send their Members, but then, for the first time, he called upon the Parliament of Ireland to choose two worthy Members of Trinity College in that city to represent them. Therefore, from the earliest periods of our history we found that University representation had been a remarkable incident in our representative system. But, coming lower down, what did we find at the time of the Union of Great Britain with Ireland? What was done at that time? Why, as was well known, 100 Members were chosen from the Irish Parliament to represent them in the British House of Commons. At that time the learned Members for the University of Dublin, which had been two in the Irish Parliament, were reduced to one, and accordingly, at the time of the Union, only one was returned for the University of Dublin? Well, what took place afterwards? Why, Lord Grey and Lord John Russell in 1832, in that memorable Reform Bill which he regretted very much had not been made the model of the present Redistribution Bill, gave back the second seat to the University of Dublin, out of the five additional Members to Ireland provided by the Bill, four of them being given to Irish boroughs, as hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway were well aware. Therefore, they found that in a memorable era not only was the University representation system advocated and defended by the efforts and the zeal of these great Reformers, but they actually gave an additional Member to the University of Dublin. He now came to the year 1854. In that year Lord John Russell, when Prime Minister, proposed to add to University representation. He proposed to give one Member to the University of Dublin, but failed in his attempt. The Bill was thrown out, and Lord John Russell went out with it. That brought them down to 1867, and what took place then? Why, Mr Disraeli not only gave representation to the City of London, but actually added two more University Representatives to the list by giving a joint representation to the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrews, and to the Universities of Aberdeen and Glasgow. Therefore, they found that not only for a long period in our representative history were Representatives for Universities not diminished, and no attempts made to take away the representation of Literature and the Republic of Letters altogether, but in every Reform Bill which had been introduced since 1832 they found that additions had been made to University representation. Therefore, he must say that he was exceedingly surprised—perhaps not so much when he saw the character of this Redistribution Bill—but he certainly was surprised to find that on the Treasury Bench, a distinguished right hon. Gentleman had said that, though he was committed, as it were, to this Redistribution Bill, yet in his own humble opinion he believed the University representation scheme to be anomalous, and did not feel very warm in supporting it. Not only that, but what was even more surprising was that the distinguished right hon. Gentleman who sat at the head of the Treasury Bench, that right hon. Gentleman who was such an ornament to his own University, and whom he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) recollected in the University, having been a contemporary of his, had, in the course of his speech on this question, given it as his opinion that though he should not be favourable

now to the removal of the University representation from our Parliamentary system, yet that the time might come when the matter might be discussed with a view to its being no longer continued. He (Sir Eardley Wilmot) quite agreed with the hon. Member for South Northumberland that the redeeming feature of the Redistribution Bill was the continuance of University representation. It was, to his mind, an oasis in the dark and dreary and barren wilderness of this Redistribution Bill. Hon. Members might not have heard what he said last week; but he had spoken out pretty plainly, and he was quite ready to do so again. He did not think anyone could arrive at a conclusion upon the question without having gone into all matters connected with it. He had gone into all these matters, and he did think that if they were to have a representative system in which gentlemen, as had been already pointed out, who felt unwilling to undergo the fatigue, trouble, and anxiety of a personal canvass, could find in these academic groves the opportunity of being returned to this House, they would do well to keep sacred the University representation. There was the additional advantage that voters residing at a distance from their University could exercise the franchise by means of voting papers, which were rendered legal by Mr. Disraeli in 1867 or 1868. He believed also that hon. Members could be returned in their absence. He would put it to right hon. Gentlemen who represented the Universities whether it was not possible for them to be returned not only without personal labour, but even without the necessity of their being present to receive the honour bestowed upon them, and without expense or canvass? There was an admirable Debating Society at Oxford, in which gentleman received some training in the art of debate; and, no doubt, many of these gentlemen, while seeking oratorical distinction in that Society, looked forward to the distinguished honour which they might some time or other enjoy of a seat in this House. Amongst the members of this Society had been the right hon. Gentleman at the head of Her Majesty's Government himself; and it was unnecessary to call to the recollection of hon. Members such distinguished names as those of Sydney Herbert, Lord Lincoln, Mr. Twisleton, and Mr. Claughton, now Bishop of St. Albans. Gentlemen in this Society, whilst preparing themselves in the curriculum of politics, no doubt looked forward to at some future period attaining to what he might call the blue ribbon of our representative system—namely, the representation of a University. Therefore, he did protest as strongly as he could against the destruction of the University representation—against depriving the country of one of its brightest gems and greatest honours. It was said that the Republic of Letters now needed no support; but he could only say that our representative system required all the support that everyone could give it. He saw the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) in his place, and he would recall to his mind a passage taken from the very able work that he had written—namely, the life of his distinguished relative, Lord Macaulay, where that great statesman pointed out the advantage that literary men might possess who, removed from the stormy regions of politics, still could find themselves able not only to represent their fellows in connection with the University, but also to devote themselves to an elucidation and explanation of those great questions which were discussed in this great Assembly. Therefore, in these few words he was glad to have the opportunity of saying how strongly he protested against this proposed alteration. He had no idea and no expectation that such a proposal would be carried, but considered that the sense and good feeling and the sentiments of men whom he saw all around him would revolt against this attempt to rob our representative system of one of its most distinguised ornaments.

Mr. CROPPER said, that although, no doubt, many of them had regretted to see the debate adjourned the other evening, yet the adjournment had had a good effect, inasmuch as a great deal had been done by the speeches of the Irish Members to win opinion on the Ministerial side of the House against their views, and to make it evident to many hon. Gentlemen who had been doubtful on the subject, that this was not the time to remove from this Assembly two of its most distinguished orna-

ments. He had listened with some interest to the speeches of the Irish Members, and had thought there was something characteristic in the brutality of the expressed wish that now that hon Members had the Universities down they should "cut their throats" He did not believe there were many, even on the Benches below the Gangway opposite, who would sanction that opinion; still, it had been expressed, and it led one to think that there was plenty of reason for the desire that light and learning and culture and education should have a little more place in this abode than they had at present He had listened to the various remarks which had been made on the Ministerial side in the previous debate, and it appeared to him that the objections to the system of University representation resolved themselves into three—he was, of course, only speaking of those raised on the Ministerial side of the House, and not of those raised on the other side below the Gangway. These three objections were—in the first place, that it did not represent local population, but represented something other than the mere counting of heads towards which our coming system of representation tended. in the second place, it was urged that the system was an injury to the Universities themselves, as it imparted into them some of that animosity, jobbery, and unpleasant contrast of opinions and feelings which, no doubt, arose to an undue height where political organization and excitement developed, and, in the third place, the objection was raised that the hon. Gentlemen returned to Parliament by the Universities did not rightly represent them so far as learning and culture were concerned With regard to the suffrage, it did not appear to him that, at a time when they were still retaining in this country any quantity of different suffrages, when a man could go into a county and buy a 40s. freehold, and when men all round spoke of having six or seven votes—and the right hon Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade Mr Chamberlain himself declared that he possessed so many—it certainly seemed rather an excess of purity to desire to purge away this representation that represented something besides property, and to take away that small amount of representation which was given to culture, and the degrees that represented it. Then, as to the injury that was done to the Universities, no doubt something of the kind occurred, but if anyone representing a borough would look into the circumstances of his constituency, he would not doubt that a good deal of injury was done there by political appointments, jobbery, and so forth. He would find that every public appointment, from that of coroner down to that of letter-carrier, was too apt to be guided by political considerations. Then, if that was the case, could they afford to throw stones at the Universities, and charge against them that politics had too much to do with the appointment of men in the seats of learning? He had an opportunity during the past few days of discussing this question with men who seemed to represent the feeling of the Universities, and they did not admit that the jobbery and other iniquities about which so much had been said of late were really attendant upon the system of University representation. They altogether denied that Convocation made its appointments from political motives. He had not the honour of a seat upon that Body; therefore, he could only take this from hearsay. At the worst, if all that was alleged were true, from what he knew of boroughs he was inclined to believe that what took place in the Universities was no more than what took place in the different constituencies of the country. Then, lastly, as to the Members, it was said they did not fairly represent the Universities, and that they were not fair exponents of the system of education adopted in England. It would be difficult to say what every man especially represented, and yet, for himself, he believed that the three countries of England, Scotland, and Ireland were admirably represented in the House by the University Members. He thought they might say that the first scientist in the House was the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock); that the most eloquent man in the House—and in so saying he would not wish to bar other men of equal power—was the junior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson); and that the most persuasive man was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Edinburgh (Sir Lyon Playfair). He

spoke of these three right hon. and hon. Gentlemen because they were all absent. He might say that in these three men they had, at any rate, Representatives of the highest culture of three different kinds—Gentlemen who took the greatest interest in education and in the success of the Universities they represented. Well, it was, perhaps, too late to talk upon the main question before the Committee. He, for one, had no doubts whatever in his mind upon the question, and he desired to support the system as it at present existed. Both sides of the House were pledged to support it, and Whips had been sent out by the two Parties in order that the division might be won by a large majority. Yet it might be desirable that those who would vote for the measure should just say at once that, so far as they were concerned, it was their opinion that the representation of the Universities should still continue, and that, at any rate, they should see how they liked a complete development of that which was said to be a more perfect democratic system before they gave up altogether that which now existed, and which retained, amongst many other franchises, the franchise which was said to represent culture, and, whether it did so or not, at any rate represented a large number of educated men.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kendal (Mr. Cropper) had said the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain had six votes. He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) surpassed the right hon. Gentleman, because, when he first entered Parliament, he used to go into the Lobby with 16 Gentlemen for whom he had votes, and for whom he should have voted had they been opposed. He was glad to have the opportunity of saying a few words as a graduate of the University of London. He knew it would be said of that University that, though the late Member and the present Member were very distinguished men, and great ornaments to the House of Commons, neither of them were graduates of the University. It might be accepted as a reproach to the University that they had never yet found one of their own graduates to represent them in Parliament; but let him remind the Committee that there were graduates who were in every respect fit to represent the University. For instance, there was the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General (Sir Farrer Herschell). He was a graduate of the University of London; he was now a great ornament to the House; he held political opinions similar to those of the majority of the graduates; and no one, no matter to what Party he belonged, would deny that the hon. and learned Gentleman would very efficiently represent the constituency. There was another very eminent Member of the House who was also a graduate of the University of London — namely, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld). He, too, would do honour to his University, as, indeed, he would do honour to any constituency who reposed confidence in him. There were other graduates of the University to whom he could refer; but, certainly, he was justified in referring to the two Gentlemen he had mentioned, to show that the University of London had produced men who were fitted in all respects to represent the constituency in Parliament. It had been said by those who supported the Amendment now under consideration, that the University of London had exercised its privileges better than some of the other Universities. He would not go so far as that, because the Representatives of the other Universities were very distinguished men; they were all ornaments to the House, and they were all men who did honour to the constituencies that had returned them. But still he might single out the argument of hon. Gentlemen, as a proof that the University of London had done its duty in sending to the House of Commons men who eminently contributed to the collective wisdom of the nation. It was only by the Act of 1867 that the University of London was granted the privilege of being represented in the House of Commons. That Act added three University Members to the House—namely, one for the University of London and two for the Universities of Scotland. He asked the Committee if it was prepared to disturb so recent a redistribution of power? Were they prepared to upset the decision which was come to only 17 years ago to increase the representation of Universities? It seemed to him that the then Parliament was a very Liberal Parliament, perhaps not so Liberal as the present, but still it was one in which the

Party opposite had a large majority. When so recent a Parliament increased the representation of Universities, it did seem to him that it would be a most unwise step for the present Parliament not only to go back on the decisions come to, but to go a great deal further, and expel from the House those who were the Representatives of learning and culture. On these grounds, he strongly opposed the Amendment now before the Committee. He regretted that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) was not in his place. That hon. and learned Member, in the speech he made on the second reading of the Bill, gave a very interesting account of what was likely to be the constitution of the new Parliament. The speech made a great impression upon a Friend of his (Mr. Fowler's), who sat on the opposite Benches, and that hon. Gentleman wrote some lines upon it. The lines were published anonymously, but he thought the Committee would have little difficulty in detecting the distinguished author; they were—

"The prospect of reform can give little cause
Its sight to make anyone funk,
Only think of 500 parochial M.P.'s,
And Bryce says they all will be drunk."

MR. P. J. POWER said, he understood that, in consequence of the compromise arrived at between the two Front Benches, Her Majesty's Government intended to support the present University system of representation. It would be curious and interesting to see by what line of reasoning Her Majesty's Government arrived at their conclusion. It appeared to him that the decision was at variance with the spirit which was supposed to animate the Government in proposing the Franchise Act, and more in accord with the spirit which animated those hon. Members below the opposite Gangway who were favourable to the proportional system of representation. If minorities were to be represented, there were many institutions, such, for instance, as Chambers of Commerce in large centres of population, which had a prior claim to Universities. One of the arguments used by those who approved the present system of University representation was that, if they deprived the Universities of their Members, they would deprive the House of some of its most intelligent Members, and some of its greatest ornaments. He maintained, however, that if the Members for the Universities were all that they were said to be, and if they held the views of the majority of their fellow-countrymen, many constituencies would be glad to avail themselves of their services; but if, on the other hand, they did not hold views in accordance with the views of the vast majority of their countrymen, he failed to see why they should be in the House of Commons, as it was said that that was essentially a Representative Assembly. Then, again, he failed to see that it necessarily followed that a great classical scholar or a mathematician must be a good politician; in fact, it was usually found that those who were great bookworms, or who had devoted their lives to study of any particular kind, did not make successful politicians. He thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), whom he saw in his place on the Treasury Bench, afforded a good illustration of what he said. Everyone acknowledged that the right hon. Gentleman was a literary man of the very first rank; but no one, not even the greatest admirers of the right hon. Gentleman, would maintain he had succeeded as an Administrator. He (Mr. P. J. Power) was not in a position to say whether the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who were returned to the House by the Universities of England and Scotland, were men who represented the views of a considerable number of their fellow-countrymen, neither was he in a position to say from experience that they were the great scholars they were imagined to be. But this he could say, with confidence, that the right hon. and learned Gentlemen (Mr. Gibson and Mr. Plunket) who represented the University of Dublin held views diametrically opposed to the views entertained by an overwhelming majority of the Irish people; and should Dublin University be disfranchised, he imagined those right hon. and learned Gentlemen would have some difficulty in obtaining seats elsewhere. The Members in the quarter of the House in which he sat were accused of importing into this question, and into many other questions, a spirit of sectarian animosity. He thought the charge was quite without foundation; indeed, he and his hon. Friends could assert,

with truth, that the tendency in that direction was to be observed in the hon. Gentlemen who differed from them. Looking to their history in the past, it would be found that the spirit of Irish Nationality had been essentially wide and open, and essentially unsectarian. Whether that could be said of the spirit which animated the hon. Members who differed from them, he doubted very much. Judging the members of the Dublin University by their Representatives, it certainly could not be said they held views in accord with the views of the majority of the Irish people. The Records of the House would prove that measures for the coercion and oppression of the Irish people invariably received the support of the Members for the University of Dublin. It might be maintained that the right hon. and learned Gentlemen were merely doing their duty, and giving votes in accordance with the wishes and feelings of those who sent them to Parliament. He was fully prepared to believe that, and it was because he believed it that he was desirous of seeing University representation abolished. Furthermore, there was no doubt that the display of sectarian animosity which he and his hon. Friends regretted so much, had been prompted, and was now prompted, by the University of Dublin. He maintained that one of the objects of education, both intermediate and University, was to produce, or help to produce, useful citizens. In that duty, however, the University of Dublin had failed in a remarkable degree. The men the University had turned out might be very useful men to England; but they had invariably neglected their duties to their own country, and had identified themselves with the Party which the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had termed the "English Party." He (Mr. P. J. Power) went further than that, and said that they had thrown in their lot with what were generally known in Ireland as "the garrison."

MR. GREGORY said, he was prepared to leave the case as it concerned the English Universites to the able defence the Representatives of those Universities had made. What he wished was to address himself to the question of the University of Dublin, upon which the latter part of the debate had turned. He accepted the movement of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, to abolish the representation of Dublin University, as an indication of their admission that, under this Bill, the representation of Ireland was too large. In that view, he fully concurred, Ireland would be over-represented—a defect in the Bill which might be remedied when the opportunity presented itself. Take it upon what ground they liked, contribution to Revenue, or the number of the electorate, or take it on the principle of proportion of population, Ireland was over-represented in the Bill. He was happy to perceive among Irish Members an admission of this; but there would be a further opportunity of discussing that point. He regretted that the principle of proportion of population was the sole principle and foundation of the Bill; other considerations should have been entertained, contribution to Revenue, and the character of the electorate; but take it even upon the principle of population, Ireland was not entitled to so large a number as 103 Members. Now, hon. Members sought to reduce that number by abolishing the seats for Dublin University; but surely they were beginning at the wrong end—at the head instead of the tail—the reduction should be made among some of the small boroughs and in some of the Irish counties. In the proper manner, and at the proper time, he hoped such a reduction would be made. The attack on the University of Dublin had been to a considerable extent answered by the right hon. and learned Gentlemen (Mr. Gibson and Mr. Plunket) who represented that constituency; but he (Mr. Gregory) wished to advert to one or two points raised by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). The hon. Gentleman began his speech by alleging, though he did not lay much stress upon the allegation, that the University was supported upon the proceeds of the confiscation of Roman Catholic property. Well, if they allowed such bygone histories to be revived, he (Mr. Gregory) was afraid that many Colleges, certainly many schools, hospitals, and other institutions, might be abolished on the same grounds. Many an institution had risen on the confiscation of monastic property. However, the hon. Member did not lay much stress on the point, and he (Mr. Gregory) would not pursue it;

but the hon. Member then went on to advert to the change in the constitution of the University of Dublin effected by the Act of 1873, and he said that Act had failed in its operation. But whose fault was it, if failure there had been? He (Mr. Gregory) did not admit the Act had failed; but whose fault was it if it had. He remembered something of the Bill promoted by the late Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett)—a man whose loss the House deplored, whose memory they fondly cherished—and no more liberal measure was ever prepared than that that Bill, and no more liberal spirit in support of it was ever exhibited than that manifested by the Members of Dublin University. It was a Bill of the most comprehensive character, framed for the express purpose of bringing all classes of society, all religious denominations, within the scope of the University. If any portion of the Act had failed, it was due to the opposition of hon. Members who represented a certain section of the Irish people. The Bill itself was of a most liberal character, and every member of every religious denomination in Ireland had now the opportunity, if he chose, to avail himself of it, of taking advantage of the education afforded within the walls of Dublin University. If they did not avail themselves of the opportunity, if they did not claim their right to compete for the prizes—the Scholarships, the Fellowships offered—it was entirely their own fault. But he believed that, to a considerable extent, the people of Ireland did avail themselves of these advantages, and in an increasing degree the University was becoming more and more popular, and 1,000 graduates now elected two Members. As had been pointed out by the right hon. and learned Member (Mr. Gibson)—and the point was lost sight of in speeches of hon. Members below the Gangway—this was no question of granting the franchise, but of disfranchisement; the question was whether the House should take away a representation that already existed, and not a question of a body of electors seeking to establish a claim to representation. Here were 4,000 of the most enlightened men in the country, composed of all classes, all religions, and there was no ground shown for their disfranchisement. The hon. Member for the City of Cork referred to the Episcopalian character of the Governing Body of the University; but the Governing Body was open to Roman Catholic members, and, indeed, they formed some portion of the Governing Body, and he hoped they would be increased, for those Roman Catholic members had the interests of the University as much at heart and were as anxious to elevate the character of the institution as any of their colleagues. Members had brought the Act of Union into this discussion; but they should remember that contributions to the Exchequer, as well as proportion of population, was a principle of that Act. Would they like these principles together? What would then be the result? If they fell back upon the Act of Union, they must take that Act with all its consequences and in all its aspects. Even on the basis of population, they had no case. They were not well advised in bringing the Act of Union into their argument; they might think it hostile to the representation they wished to abolish; but if they followed out the argument to its logical sequence, he did not think it would be much in favour of the present representation of Ireland.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, it seemed to him that the arguments he had heard in the course of the debate in favour of disfranchising the Universities were perfectly conclusive. He heard with some surprise the argument that learning—nay, he believed the word used was intelligence—was entitled to a certain share of representation in Parliament. That was not paying a very high compliment to the great body of the Members of the House of Commons, for it appeared that only eight or nine Members of the Assembly were to be regarded as the representatives of intelligence. He should like to know what did all the other Members represent? Learning, forsooth, must be specially represented in the House. Well, if learning was to be specially represented, why not virtue and morality, why not honesty, why not piety? These were all very valuable qualities, and he did not see why they should not be specially represented, just as much as learning. He contended that there was no real ground for the claim of the Universities for representation in the House of Commons. The arguments of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Bryce), who introduced the Amendment now under consideration, seemed to him (Mr. Sullivan) to be un-

answerable; and one of his arguments was especially so, and that was, that it was very undesirable to introduce into these seats of learning the contentions and bitterness of contested elections and political controversies. He had heard no reply to that argument; it was a very conclusive one, and ought to have weight with the House of Commons. Let those gentlemen, young and old, some of whom were teachers, some of whom were students, pursue their studies in the quietude of their Colleges and Universities, undisturbed by the heat and turmoil of political controversies. After all, was it learning that the Members for the Universities represented? Was it because of any special title to be considered learned men, that the two eloquent Members for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson and Mr. Plunket) were elected to sit in the House of Commons? No. The question of the learning of those right hon. and learned Gentlemen was never raised at the time of their election, and such a question never would be raised at any election for the University of Dublin. The right hon. and learned Gentlemen sat here as the Representatives, not of learning or of culture—though they were learned and cultured men—but as the representatives of the high-flavoured Toryism and Orangeism of Trinity College. Their functions in the House of Commons, their actions in the House, had no relation whatsover to the interests of education or of culture, but they had all the connection in the world with the interests of the Tory Party and the Orange ascendancy in Ireland. If it be undesirable, as he believed it was, to give any special representation to Universities, he held it was particularly undesirable to give special representation to Trinity College, Dublin. In the first place, as had been already fully stated, the constituency was a small one, and one certainly over-represented with two Members. Now that we were about to revise the whole electoral machinery of the country, there was no reason why this state of things should continue. It had also been stated that the University of Dublin was an institution altogether out of harmony with the feelings of the Irish people. Nothing could be more true. Trinity College was founded as one of the parts of the machinery for the subjugation of the Irish nation. It was not founded to teach the Irish people; it was not founded to spread learning through the masses; it was founded as a branch of England's arrangements and institutions for the conquest of Ireland, and of the utter subjugation of the Irish race. Trinity College was simply an English fortress; it was as much a fortress of English power as any military fort within the four corners of the country. It was one wing of the Army and Navy of England, so far as they related to Irish affairs. Now, the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), who spoke that night, said that the doors of the University were open, and that the motto of the institution was, and had long been, "All are welcome." The words reminded him (Mr. Sullivan) of the line he very frequently saw at the bottom of the placards posted about Dublin, which emanated from the Irish proselytizing societies. Those societies declared that, to their lectures at which the Catholic faith was assailed, at which the Catholic doctrines were ridiculed, at which the whole basis of Catholic belief was warred against, "All are welcome." He only wondered that the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) did not add to this well-known phrase, another that was very frequently seen upon the proselytizing placards posted in Dublin—namely, "Catholics are affectionately invited." No doubt, the doors of Trinity College were open to the men who would betray their faith. Human nature was weak, and even the bonds of the Catholic faith were unable and insufficient, owing to human frailties, to keep every Catholic in the way he should go. Trinity College was a proselytizing and perverting institution, and some of the names of which Trinity College were most proud to-day, were the names of Irish Catholics who were perverted within the walls of that institution, the names of men who were induced, partly by the allurements of the place, and partly by the largess open to them, to betray their religious principles. It was pleaded for Trinity College that it would help to make up the lack of representation of the "Loyal minority" in Ireland. He wished to impress it upon the Government, upon the Members of the House of Commons, and upon the English people, that for whatever disloyalty

existed in Ireland to-day, those people who called themselves the "Loyal minority" were largely responsible. The laws of England were bad enough, the laws of England were hard enough upon the Irish people, but those in Ireland who called themselves the friends and supporters of those laws, made them ten times more hateful than they otherwise would have been. In the name of loyalty, the Irish people were insulted; in the name of loyalty, they were buffetted and scourged; in the name of loyalty, they were oppressed; in the name of loyalty, Irish Catholics in the North of Ireland were threatened; in the name of loyalty, Orange Lodges perpetrated their atrocities. Was it to be wondered at, therefore, that the name of England was hateful to the Irish people? The plain fact of the case was, that until the people who called themselves the "Loyalty minority" in Ireland were brought to their proper level, until their ascendancy and domination was broken, it was vain for English Ministers and Statesmen to hope they would have a loyal majority in that country. He granted there was very little chance of the Amendment being adopted. A bargain had been made between the two Front Benches, and he presumed it would be carried out—as the tree had fallen, so it would lie. But he and his hon. Friends had a fixed objection to the representation of the University of Dublin, for, while they were willing to see fair play all round, they did protest against and would resist, as far as was in their power, every remnant and relic of the ascendancy of a faction, and of anti-Irish opinion which remained in Ireland. The Government were helping to perpetuate the troublesome, disagreeable, and contentious state of things in Ireland by propping up remnants and relics of Orange ascendancy in that country. The representation of Trinity College was one of them; it was simply a Tory and Orange representation; learning had not an atom to do with it. What part had the two eloquent and able Gentlemen the present Representatives of the University of Dublin taken in the House in the interest of learning, or in the interest of liberty? None whatever. They were Party men, and as such they were elected. Learning, indeed! Find the most learned man in England, or Scotland, or Ireland, and send him to Trinity College at the time of a General Election, and he (Mr. Sullivan) had not the slightest hesitation in saying that if that man had a trace of liberality in his composition, he had no chance of election. His learning would count for nothing. But let him hoist the Orange lily, and it would count; let him abuse the Irish people, and it would count; let him denounce the chosen Representatives of the people, and it would count. The time had gone by for this humbug and pretence. The representation of Trinity College had nothing whatever to do with Literature, Art, or Science, but it had everything to do with Orangeism and Toryism. Whether their wishes prevailed or not, he and his hon. Friends were bound to resist this sham representation, and put the true state of the case before the Government and the people of England.

MR. KENNY said, it should be borne in mind that the Amendment before the Committee had been moved by a distinguished Member of a University in this country. The Amendment was one of which he (Mr. Kenny) approved in every respect; but in the few words he desired to address to the Committee, he did not propose to single out for special attack the University of Dublin because it happened to have two Parliamentary Representatives. It would be observed that the Representatives of the Government and of the Opposition, the parties to the compact which had enabled the present Bill to be discussed at the present time, had evaded the real merits of the question, and had devoted themselves to pointing out to their adherents and followers, that they must not take into consideration the merits of the question, but must be guided by the fact that the Bill was a compromise, and, as such, must be supported. As one, however, who did not happen to be attached to either English Party, he was free to act as he liked. He was disposed to criticize the compact which the rival Parties had arrived at, and, certainly, to attack as vigorously as he could that portion of it which retained the representation of the Universities. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), was attacked very fiercely from the Conservative Benches because he chose to speak in one way, and declare his intention of voting the other. He (Mr. Kenny)

did not know that the President of the Local Government Board had laid himself open to any special charge on that head. He thought that the right hon. Gentleman had simply displayed a candour, which, unfortunately, was lacking in a great many politicians at the present time, for he had told the Committee that his duty compelled him to vote "No," while his feelings prompted him to vote "Aye." The Prime Minister ventured to give no opinion on the general question, but preferred to hold himself free for a future occasion when it might be brought before the House in a definite shape. The right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote), in speaking on the question, used the phrase, "Irrespective of the merits of the case," thereby showing distinctly that he was not disposed to take any particular view of the subject, so that he (Mr. Kenny) was at liberty to assume that the mind of the right hon. Gentleman was so far open on the question of University representation, and that that was the extent to which he and his Party were bound at the present time to the Bill before the Committee. It was a point worthy of observation that the only persons who had attacked the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) were those who were directly affected by it—namely, those who were Representatives of Universities themselves. Those hon. and right hon. Gentlemen had unanimously expressed their disapproval of the terms of that Amendment, and some of them had made able speeches in opposition to it. But the question of the representation of the Universities as it had been dealt with by the University Representatives, was certainly not entitled to anything like the favourable consideration of the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Universities of Edinburgh and St. Andrews (Sir Lyon Playfair), in the course of a very able speech, had explained that the Universities did not enjoy representation in any other country in the world except the United Kingdom, and the right hon. Gentleman went on at considerable length to show that, notwithstanding the fact that they did not enjoy distinct representation, the education of those countries in which they are established, more especially Germany and France, has made enormous progress during the past 150 years. The only conclusion which he (Mr. Kenny) had been able to draw from what the right hon. Gentleman had advanced on this point was that, as a matter of fact, the direct representation of Universities had not been of the slightest advantage either to themselves or the countries to which they belonged. That, he thought, was more specially observable when he contrasted the progress made by the Universities on the Continent with the much slower rate at which those of this country had progressed. Indeed, until within the last 10 years or so, when education became State supported in this Kingdom, the people of England might be said to have been the most ignorant people in Europe. With regard to the question of the representation of the University of Dublin, to which he desired especially to refer, hon. Members in that part of the House had been accused of having attacked that University, because the Representatives it had been in the habit of sending to that House happened to differ from them in political thought and feeling. For his own part, and on that of his hon. Friends, he entirely repudiated any such intention. He had no desire to attack the representation of the University of Dublin simply because those whom it had sent to Parliament held political opinions that were contrary to his own. The representation of the University of Dublin was open to attack on much stronger and more serious grounds. For example, if they were to regard the matter as a question of proportional representation, the University of Dublin was greatly over-represented; and if they looked at it from a historical point of view, they must bear in mind that, under the Act of Union, the University of Dublin was only accorded the privilege of returning one Member, and that it was not until the passing of the Reform Act of 1832 that a second Member was added to its representation. Therefore, he contended that the claims of the University of Dublin to the representation it possessed were decidedly weaker than those of either of the English or Scotch Universities. The number of electors in the University of Dublin was another point in favour of his contention. There were only 4,048 electors comprised in the constituency of that University which returned two

Members, and there was no University in the Kingdom in which it was easier to become an elector than in the University of Dublin. It was certainly far easier to attain that status in the University of Dublin than in any of the English Universities. In the University of Dublin anyone who obtained the degree of Master of Arts was put on the electoral roll without payment of fees; but in Oxford and Cambridge he understood the electors who kept their names on the books had to pay the fees. If they contrasted the case of the University of Dublin, which returned two Members as the Representatives of 4,048 electors, with that of the Scotch University of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's, which had 6,325 electors, and only returned one Member, they would perceive that if a just proportion were observed as between the two, the University of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's would return three Representatives instead of one. In his opinion, while the House was endeavouring to remove the anomalies which existed in other portions of the electoral system, due regard ought to be paid to the anomalies that were to be found in the system of University representation. Glancing from this part of the subject to another, to which he thought some reference should be made, he would say that on the last occasion when this question was before the Committee he had listened with due attention to the eloquent tributes that were paid to the high ability and distinguished learning of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's. He had always listened with the greatest possible pleasure to the speeches made in that House by the right hon. Gentleman; but while the right hon. Gentleman was deservedly appreciated in that House it was unfortunately the case that the appreciation he met with in his own University was not quite so great. It so happened that, at the last General Election, on a poll of about 5,000 out of upwards of 6,000 electors, the right hon. Gentleman was only returned by a majority of 74. Such a result did not speak very well for the intelligent appreciation of those gentlemen who formed the constituency of the Edinburgh and St. Andrew's University, and who ought to be proud of one of the most distinguished, not only of the Scotch Representatives, but of their fellow-countrymen. Another point that had been raised with regard to the question of the representation of the University of Dublin was that throughout the whole period during which it had had the privilege of returning Members to that House it had been represented by men of one distinctive shade of political opinion. For the last 85 years the University of Dublin had returned only men holding the most extreme Tory views, with but one exception; and it was only fair and just that that exception should be referred to in the course of the present debate. He alluded to the case of the most distinguished of all the Representatives of the University of Dublin—the late Lord Plunket. All Irishmen, no matter what their political opinions, from the most extreme Orangeman to the most pronounced Nationalist, joined with the most complete accord in their appreciation and admiration of the extraordinary ability, the marvellous eloquence, the wonderful attainments, and the vast resources of that brilliant statesman. Although Lord Plunket was returned as the Representative of the University of Dublin for a great many years, he had sufficient independence of mind and liberality of heart to mark him as the most able and gifted of the advocates of Catholic Emancipation. But while he (Mr. Kenny) was disposed to look on Lord Plunket as a pride and credit to his country, he could not but bear in mind that almost every one of that great man's successors who had sat as Representatives of the University of Dublin had displayed an exactly opposite character. One of these Gentlemen—the late John Wilson Croker—was an individual whom he (Mr. Kenny) would not describe in his own words, but would prefer to characterize in the language used by the author of *The Life of Lord Macaulay*, in a passage wherein the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) did ample justice to the subject of his remarks. The right hon. Gentleman said—

"He attributed to the Right Hon. John Wilson Croker, Secretary to the Admiralty during the 30 years preceding 1830, qualities which excited his disapprobation beyond control, and possibly beyond measure. In a singularly powerful letter, written as late as 1843, he recites in detail certain unsavoury portions of that Gentleman's private life, which are not only part of the stock gossip of every bow-window in St. James's Street, but which had been brought

into the light of day in the course either of Parliamentary or judicial investigations. After illustrating these transactions with evidence which proved that he did not take up an antipathy on hearsay, Macaulay comments on them in such terms as clearly indicate that his animosity to Croker arose from incompatibility of moral sentiment, and not of political opinions. He then proceeds to remark on 'the scandals of Croker's literary life,' 'his ferocious insults to women, to Lady Morgan, Mrs. Austin, and others,' his twitting Harriet Martineau with deafness, his twitting Madame D'Arblay with concealing her age. 'I might add,' he says, 'one hundred other charges. These, observe, are things done by a Privy Councillor, by a man who has a pension from the country of £10,000 a-year, by a man who affects to be a champion of order and religion. Macaulay's judgment has been confirmed by the public voice, which, rightly or wrongly, identifies Croker with the character of Rigby in Mr. Disraeli's *Coningsby*."

This estimate offered by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) of John Wilson Croker's character—an estimate from the pen of one who could not be supposed to be biased—would seem to show that the present electors of Trinity College and University had no reason to be proud of one, at least, of their past Representatives. With regard to the action taken by the Representatives of the Dublin University in reference to the spread of education, it was not too much to say that on every occasion on which the question of Irish education had been raised, prior to the last Administration, the Members for that University had appeared as the most violent opponents of the educational movement. On the proposed grant to Maynooth College, in the year 1845, one of the Leaders of the opposition to that proposal, which was fair and just, and was eventually sanctioned by that House, was the then Representative of Trinity College, a man of no great eminence until he succeeded in becoming a Judge. The same remark might be made in regard to every one of the Representatives of Dublin University down to the present time, with the exception of the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen who were now returned by that constituency. It had been frequently stated that the University Representatives were returned for the purpose of guarding the Republic of Letters; but, from all the evidence yet afforded on the subject, the Republic of Letters existing within the walls of Trinity College consisted of a very narrow oligarchy. They knew that the electors of Dublin University had obstinately refused to receive, with anything like favour, some of their most distinguished Members, because they happened to entertain enlightened and liberal views. Why was it that men like Professor Mahaffy and Professor M'Kay were not listened to in Trinity College? How was it that Professor Webb, a distinguished Professor of Law in Trinity College, only received about 20 votes when proposed as a candidate for Dublin University? How did it happen, in connection with Trinity College, that it was only aspiring lawyers—men who had passed from the College to the Treasury Bench as Attorney General or Solicitor General—were received as the Representatives of the electors of Dublin University? The University of Dublin in no way represented Irish education, and it had always been narrow and exclusive. It had been stated that Catholics were admitted to the University. Of course they were; but until recently their admission was subject to an oath. That oath had, however, been abolished, and Catholics might now be received; but still, with all this, the University remained the University of the minority of the Irish people. Virtually the Catholics of Ireland had nothing in the shape of a University, and the higher education of that country was unsatisfactory. With regard to the Royal University, that institution had no share in the University representation of Ireland. It had been incorporated with the Queen's University, which had, he believed, over 2,000 graduates, who, he assumed, were entitled to at least one Representative in Parliament on the same principle as had been recognised in the case of the London University, which had something like 2,100 electors. Nevertheless, it was neither proposed to give a separate representation to Queen's University, nor to amalgamate it with Trinity College. Furthermore, if one Member were taken from Trinity College, the proportion of representation would be made the same as in the cases of the Universities of London and of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's. Therefore, when he suggested that a step should be taken in the direction he had just indicated, he proposed nothing that was more extreme, or could work any greater elec-

toral injustice, than was perpetrated in the cases of the London and Edinburgh and St Andrew's Universities. He had observed in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University (Mr Beresford Hope), who had expressed his views in favour of the retention of University representation, that one of the reasons advanced by that right hon Gentleman was that "the Universities were concentrated centres of learning and teaching, and, as some had said, of high thinking and low living." He was surprised to hear from such an authority that the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were places of low living, although he should have supposed they were places of plain living. When, therefore, he was told that those Universities were places of low living, he begged to protest against any such doctrine. Again, it should be said that while the Universities had been represented in that House, and it was claimed on behalf of their Members that they were the Representatives of learning, it was a singular fact that it had never yet fallen to the lot of a University Member to hold the Office of Minister of Education in this country; while the administration of education had invariably, since 1873, fallen into the hands of those who had never been connected with the Universities. Furthermore, it was to be noted that the most distinguished University men had, as a rule, not been chosen as the Representatives of their Universities, but had generally been obliged to go to other constituencies in order to obtain seats in that House. Quite recently, in the case of the University of Cambridge, one of the most distinguished men in that University had been rejected by an overwhelming majority, and a Gentleman who was a perfect stranger had been elected. He (Mr Kenny) regarded that as a disgrace to University representation, and as a distinct argument against the retention of the system. Similar things had occurred in many other cases, which, however, it was not necessary to recite. He might, perhaps, refer to the case in which the University of Oxford had refused to re-elect the right hon. Gentleman who was now at the head of the Government—a circumstance that had been remarked upon more than once in the course of that debate. It was an evidence of what he must regard as the evil effect the system of University representation had upon Representatives that when the right hon Gentleman the Prime Minister went elsewhere as Leader of the new crusade of Liberalism it was remarked that he was then "unmuzzled," which meant that he was released from the strictness of the University tests, and at liberty to become the Representative of Democracy. A distinguished Member of the Dublin University—the late Sir Jonas Barrington—once put forward as a serious argument that the people of Ireland ought not to be allowed to learn to read and write lest they might follow the programme given in a book of Moore's called *Captain Rock*; nevertheless, they succeeded in mastering the doctrines contained in Moore's famous work; but he (Mr. Kenny) felt confident that, even at the present time, there could be found in the University of Dublin men who argue in the same manner as Sir Jonas Barrington argued 70 years ago—men who talked about the pernicious doctrines of *United Ireland* becoming incorporated in the national teaching. He held that the more they examined the system of University representation, the more was it seen to be a system which ought not to be continued. The hon Gentleman who last sought the representation of Cambridge University would probably have remained for a long time outside that House had it not been for the fact that a Liberal constituency in London chose to elect him. The hon. Member's Predecessor in that borough—the late Professor Fawcett—was a man who never represented a University, although he was a man of most distinguished University attainments; and innumerable instances might be cited in which Universities had rejected their most distinguished men and selected Gentlemen of a totally different stamp, merely because their political views were such as harmonized with those of the majority of the electors. He contended that the system of University representation had an evil effect on the inner life of the Universities themselves, because it was an unquestionable fact that politics were introduced where questions of learning alone should prevail; and it was well known that the selections made for the most important Chairs in the various Universities were dictated, not by a

regard for the actual fitness of the candidates, but rather by the harmony existing in point of political feeling between them and the Members for the Universities. On these grounds, therefore, he should give his support to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce); and, in conclusion, he would only add that, in his opinion, the system of University representation was an anachronism in itself, and, as it seemed to him, a fraud on the people.

Mr. O'BRIEN said, it was an unparalleled circumstance that a discussion of so much importance as that which had that evening been initiated by his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) should have been allowed to proceed so far without a single voice from the Treasury Bench being raised. He regarded it as in the nature of a misfortune that the case of Trinity College should have been combined with the general question of University education. The discussion had proceeded under the depressing knowledge that the Government had bound themselves hand and foot to the wrong thing in reference to University education, the Irish Members believing that the case of Trinity College rested on a much different and a stronger foundation. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the senior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) had expressed himself as being at a loss to know on what grounds the Irish Members specially attacked the representation of Trinity College. Their reply was, that if, as he believed was conceded by the Government, the case against University representation in general was a good one, it was infinitely stronger and better against a single University in Ireland which monopolized the whole of the University representation of the country, to the exclusion of another and —although he had no great admiration for the Royal University, he would say —a wider and more representative University. Was it not complained that the Members for the English Universities did not adequately express or represent the opinions of those Universities? What the Irish Members complained of was, that the two University Members sent from Ireland did not even represent a narrow portion of the University life of that country; but, on the contrary, they were merely the Representatives of an institution that was a standing offence to the great body of those persons who were entitled to and who sought University education there. That House had placed on the Statute Book, when it passed the Royal University Act, a confession of the unsatisfactory representative character of Trinity College. The present Prime Minister had gone out of Office in the year 1874 in an effort to find a substitute for it. The Royal University Act need never have been passed if Trinity College had been a really National University; and in dealing with the matter that House, as usual, only went halfway. It confessed that Trinity College was a failure; it confessed that the great majority of the University students would have to be provided for outside Trinity College; and still it preserved that institution, with all its huge revenues, amounting, according to his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork, to £85,000 of Irish money a-year, preserving also its monopoly of University representation in Ireland; and now, of course, the easy defence of that monopoly was, that not only did Trinity College possess the lion's share of the money, but it also returned Representatives, as the House was so often informed, of the intelligence and culture of the country. The Irish Members had heard a good deal that evening—and he thought they had heard a little too much—of the culture and intelligen e which was supposed to reside exclusively among their opponents in Ireland. They denied that Trinity College, to any extent, possessed a monopoly of the intelligence or culture of Ireland. They heard and knew enough of the very liberal estimate their opponents in Ireland formed of their own intelligence; but this matter was susceptible of rather better proof than their own confident assurances on the subject, and he was confident that the Irish people—however it might be with the House—were not very much impressed or overawed with the manifestations of superior intelligence which, from time to time, reached them from the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry), or from the galaxy of Gentlemen above the Gangway who represented the landlord section in Ireland. He did not speak of the Irish University Members, as to

whose abilities he certainly did not wish to subtract one word from the eulogium of the hon Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy); but he spoke of hon Gentlemen who generally sat behind them, and who, he believed, reflected much more faithfully the Tory political and general idiosyncracies of Ireland. These Gentlemen were not over-wise in taunting the Irish people with their barrenness of that culture of which they themselves were the finished product. It set the Irish people thinking of the causes of their position, and recalled to their minds a state of facts that, he fancied, English statesmanship had much more cause to blush for than had his countrymen, and that Orange statesmanship had much more cause to blush for—if they could conceive such a thing as Orange statesmanship or as Orangemen blushing at anything. What were the facts? Why, during the past five years, under the intermediate education system and under the Royal University Act, the conditions of competition in intelligence in Ireland had been to some extent equalized, and he did not think it was the people they the Irish Members below the Gangway on the Opposition side of the House who had come off worst. Of course, Trinity College was saved from any vulgar test of that kind. Trinity College had plenty of money, nobody to compete with, and nobody to account to. It entered into no sort of competition by which it could be judged. They knew this—that the President of the Queen's College in Cork always claimed in his Reports that his standard of education was higher than the standard of Trinity College; and it was perfectly notorious that the pupils in Trinity College who were educated up to its highest standard were simply nowhere in contests with students of the Royal University, who were sent up from the Endowed Colleges in Ireland. The talk they constantly heard and the airs of intellectual superiority they constantly saw assumed on the part of Trinity College might impose on the Committee; but in Ireland these things simply excited the amusement of practical educationalists. Who were these paragons, these graduate electors of Trinity College, who were preserved as though they were the oxygen of the Irish political atmosphere? Why, the sons of land agents and small gentry in Ireland—a class whom one of the most distinguished Professors in Trinity College had described as the most ignorant, the most unlettered, and worthless gentry in Europe. Then there were the gentlemen of the Protestant Divinity School in Trinity College, nearly every smart young fellow from which body came over here to England the moment he could get any situation in the Church of England, and never had anything more to do with the Irish Church than, perhaps, the recording of a vote for the right hon. and learned Gentlemen the Members for Dublin University. Then there were the doctors and the lawyers. He utterly repudiated the claim either of Trinity College or its Members to represent the intelligence of Ireland even in these professional bodies. He maintained that they only represented a faction, and a yearly-decreasing faction, even within that large Party. The great bulk of the Irish doctors belonged not to Trinity College, but to the Catholic University School of Medicine, and were Nationalists heart and soul. As to the lawyers, it was another of the extraordinarily monstrous monopolies that Trinity College had managed to get hold of, that it had the right to compel every law student in Ireland to pass through it. Under influences of that sort, and under the influence of the £100,000 a-year which the Government spent in the corruption of the people of Ireland, up to a short time ago Irish barristers were as anti National as right hon. Gentlemen could wish. They took their politics with just as easy virtue as they took their fees—according to the amount that was marked on their briefs. But it was perfectly notorious that, even at the Irish Bar, there had been a very remarkable revulsion of feeling of late. Perhaps it was partly due to the attitude of the Government. They had been cutting down the Judgeships and other sources of corruption now that political lawyers in Ireland of the stamp of Judge Keogh were no longer worth their salt. He believed the revulsion of feeling at the Bar, however, to be largely due to higher motives—to the working up into higher social strata and to higher levels of the National and Democratic movement in Ireland. But whether that was so or not, though it might be a bold thing to say, he believed that if there were a select ballot taken at this moment in

the Hall of the Four Courts in Dublin in favour of the two Dublin University Members, who were extremely popular in their Profession, and the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), he did not think those right hon. and learned Gentlemen would be as secure of their majority as they were to-night; and he was sure that, so far as the law students were concerned—the lawyers of the future—the right hon. and learned Gentlemen would do well to endeavour to provide themselves with a more tractable constituency. There was no more extraordinary delusion in the English mind than the notion that had been put into it that the National movement in Ireland throve on ignorance, and that the seats the right hon. and learned Gentlemen the Members for the University of Dublin occupied were the last refuges and entrenchments of the distressed intelligence of the country. He maintained that exactly the reverse of that was the truth. If they took up a map of Ireland, showing the organization of the National League, he ventured to say that in the wretched illiterate communities along the Western seaboard, which, in England, were habitually supposed to be the headquarters of Irish disaffection, they would find very few branches, and they would find that popular demonstration was extremely feeble. In those counties where education was most widespread, and where the standard of intelligence amongst the people was the highest, it would be found that the National movement had reached its greatest intensity. Even in the North of Ireland, where, amongst the Orange farmers, it was so difficult to get them to read anything on the side of the Nationalists, or even on their own side, it was found that the higher the ratio of education in a district the stronger was the League, and the more confirmed was the antipathy to the present system of government. He could point to a hundred proofs of what he said. He knew himself that the greatest hot-bed of Nationality in Ireland at that moment were the very schools and Colleges in which the future University graduates were being trained. When the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork visited his constituency, one of the most ardent addresses of welcome he was always sure to receive was an address from the students in the Queen's College in Cork. The senior Member for the University of Dublin was, he believed, President of the Historical Society in Trinity College; and he ventured to think the right hon. and learned Gentleman would admit that he had received a great many indications, in addresses and otherwise, from members of that Society within the walls of his own College, that National and Democratic principles were beginning to infect even his own constituents. In the same way with the great body of intelligence outside the University in Ireland. The last time his hon. Friend (Mr. Parnell) was in Cork a deputation of Conservative gentlemen of wealth, standing, and intelligence—men like Sir George Colthurst and Sir John Arnot—waited upon him just as they would formerly have waited upon a Lord Lieutenant, and invited his assistance, and placed the practical regulation of the business of the county in his hands. Where were evidences of this kind that the Members for the University of Dublin could show for their own faction in Ireland? Where were the converts they were making? There were none. On the contrary, it was notorious that this element in the country was forsaking its politics, except, of course, the residuum of old-fashioned fanatics and the landlords, who lived on the oppression and the misfortunes of the poor. He must do the right hon. and learned Gentlemen themselves the justice to say that they did not even represent faithfully or fully the intolerance and illiberality of their own constituents. On the contrary, it was well known that they were very often reproached in the organs of the Orange faction in Ireland with not appearing as frequently in the van of Orange riots and counter-demonstrations as some of their more advanced Colleagues were in the habit of doing. They were taunted with aiming more at being English politicians than Irish Tory politicians. He did not at all find fault with them for making that their aim; and he should think that these right hon. and learned Gentlemen would be rather obliged to the House than otherwise if it allowed them to transfer their undoubted abilities to some snug and tranquil English Tory seats, and relieved them of the disagreeable necessity of living down to the practice of the prejudices and caprices of their Orange constituencies. The

youth and intelligence of Ireland, he maintained, were on his side, and were not likely to be silent with regard to unreal and fancy representation of this kind. Parliament must either suppress the voice of Ireland altogether, or else be prepared to hear it spoken out very emphatically and uncompromisingly, even if they did not like it. Any real representation of the people of Ireland they would not like—that was very certain. It was no defence of a close borough like Trinity College to say that the Gentlemen who represented it in that House were men that the House liked, and that, possibly, the Representatives who would be elected by any real National University would be men whom the House would dislike. That would be a good argument against bestowing anything like equal franchises upon Ireland. He would not say whether or not the House was wise in bestowing equal franchises; but if they did bestow them they should do it frankly and ungrudgingly, and take the consequences, instead of continuing to live in a fool's paradise as to the opinion of the people of Ireland They ought not to keep up this representation of the close borough of Trinity College merely for the purpose—for that was what it came to—of relieving the insignificant Tory Party in Ireland when it was submitted to the common test of the Ballot.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 79; Noes 260: Majority 181—(Div. List, No. 47.)

MR ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he rose to move an Amendment in page 1, line 13, after "boroughs," insert—

"In England and Wales which had a less population than 20,000, according to the Census of 1881, and the Parliamentary boroughs in Scotland and Ireland which had a less population than 15,000, according to the Census of 1881, and which are"

He submitted the Amendment with special reference to the increase of the numbers of the House from 658 to 670. Hon Members were aware that, if the Bill were accepted in its present form, with no further measure of disfranchisement, the number of the House would be enlarged to 670 Members. The first part of the 1st Schedule now contained the names of all boroughs under 15,000 population which it was proposed should no longer have separate representation and in the scheme of the Boundary Commissioners it had been arranged that the boroughs should be merged in their respective counties. He proposed, by his Amendment, that there should be added to this Schedule the names of all boroughs in England and Wales which had a smaller population than 20,000 according to the Census of 1881. The chief object of the Amendment was to affirm that it was better to proceed by disenfranchising boroughs of under 20,000 population rather than to make an addition to the numbers of the House. The increase proposed in Scotland was 12. On that day week he had complained of his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), because he stated, by anticipation, an objection on the part of Her Majesty's Government to this Amendment; but he was now disposed to thank the right hon. Baronet for having given him an opportunity of replying so early in his observations to the objection raised. The right hon. Baronet had said that Her Majesty's Government would object to the Amendment because it did not draw an even line between the three parts of the United Kingdom. Well, he should be glad to meet the right hon. Baronet's view; and so very strong was his repugnance to the increase in the numbers of the House that, if the right hon. Baronet would accept the proposal, he should be willing to take out the number of 15,000 from his statement as applied to Scotland and Ireland, and to insert 20,000. He thought, however, he should be able to show the Committee that his Amendment would be better as it stood. The increase proposed for Scotland was 12. Now, in 1832 and in 1868, Scotland obtained an increase of her representation in this House, but not by enlargement of the numbers of the House. Scotland then obtained an increase in the way in which he proposed that she should now obtain a further increase. The Bill fixed the limit of disfranchisement of boroughs at 15,000; and he was quite sure that there was a general impression in the House and in the country that—at least in the most populous of the Three Kingdoms—20,000 would be a better limit. Now, if the Committee were to adopt the Amendment what would be the consequences? There were in England, according to the

Census of 1881 which governed the Bill, 16 boroughs of between 15,000 and 20,000 population. There was not one borough in Wales that came within that limit. There was Radnor County with 16,872; but there was no borough. In the electoral statistics the Montgomery Boroughs appeared under 20,000; but in the more authentic Census the population was 20,042. In Scotland there were two—namely, the St. Andrew's group and the Wick group. There was also Bute County. In Ireland there were three boroughs between these limits; but he was sure the Committee would recognize the fact that the distribution of the people was very different in Scotland and Ireland, and he did not propose, by the Amendment, to merge in counties either the two Scottish groups or the three Irish boroughs—Newry, Galway, and Kilkenny—which came within the limit. The Committee would, he was sure, recognize the convenience of the plan he proposed to adopt. And if this important question of preference between further disfranchisement or increase of the number of the House were left until they reached the Schedules, the Committee would be greatly embarrassed in its procedure by the difficulty of making a choice of names; whereas, if the Committee adopted the proposal in the Amendment, they would be following the lines of previous Reform Bills. If they took the 16 English boroughs for further disenfranchisement, they would be proceeding upon the lines of 1832 and 1868. But the Committee would observe that, of these 16 boroughs, the boundaries of one—namely, Newcastle-under-Lyme, were so altered by the 5th Schedule of the Seats Bill as to include a population of 62,000; so they might, therefore, say that there remained only 15 boroughs in England of under 20,000 population. For adopting that limit of disfranchisement they had the authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), who, last year, since the production of this Bill, made a strong recommendation to his constituency in favour of adopting the limit of 20,000. He (Mr. Arnold), however, thought there was good reason for adopting the lower limit of 15,000 in regard to Scotland and Ireland as proposed by the Bill if they adopted 20,000 for England and Wales. A town of 15,000 population in Scotland or Ireland had even a greater relative importance than a town of 20,000 in England or Wales, and the distribution of seats in Scotland was entirely different to that which prevailed in this country. In Scotland the system of grouping existed, and that system was not disturbed by the present Bill. He would call the attention of the Committee to the fact that last year, in the Franchise Bill, the Government established, or, he should say, re-established, a serious difference between Scotland and England. In Scotland the soil of the boroughs was excluded from the Parliamentary county; while in England the soil of the boroughs formed a part of the county. In Ireland there were differences of franchise; and recently, in passing the Corrupt Practices Act, a different scale of expenditure for elections in that country had been established. Under the Bill now before the Committee there would only remain nine boroughs in Ireland returning Members to this House; and he thought it would be very undesirable indeed that they should, by amending the Bill, reduce that small number of boroughs from nine to six. It would be impossible to justify some differences that existed; but he was disposed to contend that it was not difficult to justify the difference of 5,000 in the limit in the Three Kingdoms. Indeed, he thought it would not be just to the circumstances of the population in Ireland and Scotland if a distinction of this kind were not made. The plan he recommended would give the measure greater permanence. The alternative was an increase of the numbers of the House, and he thought there were considerable reasons to be urged against that alternative. It went for something that the number 658 had endured since the foundation of the United Kingdom. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, speaking on this subject the other night, had referred to this particular figure of 658 as a superstition. He (Mr. Arthur Arnold) thought he was as free from superstition as the right hon. Baronet; but he attached importance to prescription. At the foundation of the United Kingdom the distribution of Members was 513 for England and Wales, 45 for Scotland, and 100 for Ireland. In 1865, 20 years

ago, the distribution stood thus—England and Wales 500 seats, Scotland 54, and Ireland 105. In 1868 Scotland, as he had said, gained seven, and the distribution then stood—England and Wales 493, Scotland 60, Ireland 105. Since that time Sligo and Cashel had been disfranchised, reducing the Irish seats to 103. Bridgwater and Beverley had also been disfranchised, reducing the English and Welsh number to 489. Latterly, other seats had been held in abeyance, though not abolished; and the fact remained that ever since the Union—ever since the formation of the United Kingdom—the number of the Members in this House had been 658. Now, in 1832 and in 1868, England, to use the words of the Prime Minister, had contributed out of her abundance to the poverty of Scotland, and he now proposed she should do so in 1885. In regard to Great Britain, without enlarging the number of the House of Commons, they had, exclusive of University seats, 548 seats to be distributed. With the seven University seats they were 555. Surely that was a Chamber numerous enough for a population of 30,000,000. In 1881 the population of Great Britain, divided by 548, gave 54,200 as the number of population for each seat, a figure which the Prime Minister, in introducing the Bill, had quoted; and one of his (Mr. Arthur Arnold's) strongest objections to increasing the number of Members was, that by so doing they diminished the ratio of population to seats. A population of 54,200 would contain scarcely more than 6,000 electors. If they increased the number of the House, and carried out the single-seat system, they must form constituencies with a smaller electorate for each seat, and so bring about the danger of a revival of corrupt practices. The right hon. Gentleman, in 1866, and again last year, spoke of this matter as one of policy and convenience. ("No, no!") Well, he would not dispute on that subject; but he maintained that when the ratio of population to seats was one to 54,200, it was a matter of more than questionable policy to increase the number of seats in the House. There was another reason of policy against such an increase, which had been most forcibly stated by the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman had said in 1866—

"We have concluded, upon the whole, after some consideration, that this House would be disinclined to add to its number, because if the proposal to increase were once assented to, it would be difficult to risk the continual intrusion of new places."

Nothing was more evident than that this Bill was not a final measure of Reform. If the single-Member system—the system of electoral districts established by the Bill—was to endure, it must be carried throughout, and he expected that upon the publication of the Census of 1891 a movement would be organized for the completion of the work. If they now consented to an increase of the number of the House, how would they resist further demands to carry the single-Member system to its logical conclusion, which would probably be made in six or seven years? So much for the question of policy. With regard to convenience, he should be surprised if there was an argument in favour of increase. He would not dwell upon the fact that the House was practically full when there were 350 Members in it. It might be said that it would be possible to build a larger House. But he did not think it would be possible to build a House with seats for 700 Members, and to continue the conduct of our debates upon the English system. They must then adopt the Continental system and have a pulpit or rostrum, and give up the English way of Members rising in their places to address the House. Then he would call attention to the fact that Scotland herself had rejected this policy of increase for her benefit. In 1868 his right hon. Friend the Member for Montrose Mr. Baxter had carried an Instruction, affirming that it was better to disfranchise boroughs in England of under 5,000 population than to increase the number of Members in the House. The right hon. Gentleman had carried that Instruction with the strenuous aid and assistance of the Prime Minister and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer. Though this was an illustrious Parliament, it was well to look abroad. There was no Chamber in the world with so many Members in proportion to the population. The House of Representatives at Washington had 325 Members; the French Chamber, 557; the German Reichstag, 397; and the Prussian Chamber, for a population nearly as large as that of Great Britain, had

432. There was, of course, no magic about the figure 658; but upon that figure there ought to be no advance without proved necessity, and the terms of his Amendment must, he was sure, carry the conviction to the minds of hon. Members that there was no proved necessity. There had probably not been a Member of the House during the century who had held a position of greater respect and regard in the opinion of the House than Sir George Grey. Well, there were a few words which he had spoken exactly relative to this question that he (Mr. Arthur Arnold) would ask the permission of the Committee to quote. Sir George Grey, in the course of a debate that took place on this subject in 1867, said—

"I cannot help feeling that the greatest inconvenience will follow any departure from that number (658), which rests on long prescription, without the most paramount necessity. I hope we may do justice to Scotland without incurring so serious an inconvenience."

He (Mr. Arthur Arnold) thought he had shown that on no grounds of policy or of convenience was this increase desirable. There was no "paramount necessity" in the present case. But this was only a part of the argument. Why should the process of merging small boroughs in counties stop in this very populous country at 15,000? In Lancashire the Bill gave one seat to about 60,000 population. Why should they be asked to increase the number of the House in order to retain boroughs with less than a third of that population? Why should they be asked to increase the numbers of the House merely so as to retain 15 constituencies in England with an average of 17,000 population each? In 1867, when Mr. Disraeli's Reform Bill was before the House, it was proposed that 7,000 should be the limit at which boroughs should cease to return two Members to the House; and the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing) had proposed an Amendment similar to that now before the Committee to raise the limit of 7,000 to 10,000. The hon. Member proposed that, and, with the assistance of the Prime Minister, carried it. What did Her Majesty's Government do on that occasion? Why, they immediately accepted the proposal, and he earnestly hoped that a Liberal Government would not be less ready to adopt an improvement. The Government had in part proposed—and he was exceedingly glad of it—that no borough containing a smaller population than 50,000 should send a Member to the House; but if they now sanctioned an increase in the number of Members in order to retain 15 boroughs having an average of 17,000 population, would it be possible for them to keep the number of the House to 670? He was convinced that their efforts ought rather to be in the other direction. Lord Grey, Lord Brougham, and other great authorities had been in favour of a considerable diminution in the number of that House. If 555 seats were not enough for Great Britain—more than five times the representation of the Kingdom of Ireland, where were they to stop? He regretted very much indeed that the Prime Minister had given the great weight of his authority to the proposal for an increase in the number of Members. Long after they who now sat in the House had passed away the right Gentleman's words would be quoted in the House. All that could be done on the other hand was to express dissent and vote against the proposal. He had heard it said that this question was not to be regarded as an open question; but he could not believe that report. He could not believe that the question of the increase of the numbers of the House would ever be treated by a Government as a question not absolutely within the discretion of the House at large. Surely, if there was one question more than another which ought to be left to the unbiased judgment of the House it was this. No pressure whatever should be put upon hon. Members. He should say that the acceptance of the Amendment would cause no general disturbance of the boundary scheme of the Government. He would undertake that if the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board would consult Sir John Lambert and his Colleagues as to the carrying out of the Amendment, they would assure him that all the changes consequent upon it could be arranged within three days, and that within that time the Amendments could be placed upon the Paper. Long before the Committee came to the Schedules the changes consequent upon the Amendment could be incorporated in the Bill; and there would be no interruption of

progress with the measure. Twelve of the 15 seats might be needed for Scotland. In that case three would remain to assist in the redistribution of the 14 English counties which would be affected. Following the precedent of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Orkney, in 1867, he did not propose to say anything on the question of redistribution. He left that to the Government. The places dealt with by the Amendment would not be disfranchised even in name. Each would assume the more proper character of a centre of the division of the county in which it was situated. The Committee, he thought, would see that the Amendment would be a great improvement on the Boundary Commissioners' scheme. In the county of Bedford the Commissioners proposed that there should be two divisions having each of them 60,000 population; and yet in that county they kept the borough of Bedford, with a population of 19,000, returning a separate Member. He was sure the Committee would see how much better the arrangement would be if Bedford were divided equally in regard to that population and three seats were given. Then, take Cornwall. It was proposed to divide it into divisions, having each of them a population of 50,000, and yet they retained the borough of Penryn with a population of about 18,000. The retention by the Committee of such an anomaly as this in order to increase the number of the House would be a matter passing his comprehension. For these reasons he begged to move that the words of which he had given Notice be inserted in the Bill.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 12, after the word "boroughs" to insert the words "in England and Wales which had a less population than 20,000, according to the Census of 1881, and the Parliamentary boroughs in Scotland and Ireland, which had a less population than 15,000, according to the Census of 1881, and which are" (*Mr. Arthur Arnold.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: As my hon. Friend Mr. Arthur Arnold proposes to carry the Bill further in the disfranchising direction than it already goes, it is desirable I should begin my remarks by pointing out to the Committee how large already is the change proposed by the Bill—very much larger than the change which has ever been proposed in any Reform Bill. By this Bill 164 seats are taken away from constituencies and given to other constituencies, as against the 143 seats so taken away in 1832. There are also six seats which were disfranchised in 1871, and which are allotted to other constituencies, making 170, as against 143. Then it is proposed to increase the number of Members by 12, so that 182 seats are to be disposed of, as against 143. Now, my hon. Friend thinks that the constituencies against which he points this Amendment sin or err against the general rules of proportion based on population. The change which is made by the Bill as regards proportion based upon population is an enormous one. At the present moment there is a discrepancy of 106 to 1, as between the most represented and the least represented constituencies in the country, taking population as the basis of calculation. Taking the electors as the basis of calculation, there is a discrepancy of 250 to 1. These proportions of 106 to 1 in some cases, and 250 to 1 in other cases, are altered by the Bill to the extreme disproportion of six to one. That is the most extreme disproportion under the present Bill. Now, my hon. Friend's Amendment would not carry this matter much further; the alteration would be one that would not be very considerable as compared with the six to one. Before I come to the special object of my hon. Friend's Amendment, I may tell the Committee that this is a matter upon which it is necessary to draw some line, to take some stand. Of course, we cannot expect that all Members, even those of the Party sitting on this side of the House, will agree in desiring to have one particular line drawn. This is a question of the balance of advantage and of disadvantage; and my own belief is, that we should not have met with general support in the House had we proposed to go further than we have proposed to go. My hon. Friend has assumed that these boroughs which he attacks are all boroughs which are on the decline. That is very far from being the case. At least four of them have very considerably more than 20,000 inhabitants at the present time, and some of them are rapidly increasing in population. My hon. Friend says that the average population of these

boroughs is 17,000; but I think it is well to point out that some of them are rapidly increasing. Hereford, Stafford, and Bedford have now more than 20,000 inhabitants, and the population of Windsor is now up to 20,000. Pontefract, which was the smallest of the boroughs in 1881, is the borough which is growing most rapidly, although its population has not yet reached 20,000. My hon. Friend has excepted Montgomery from his list, and stated that the population of that place is over 20,000. I have some reason for doubting that statement. [Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD: According to the Census.] There is some doubt as to the exact population of Montgomery; but I will not press the point. My hon. Friend says he cannot conceive that we can put forward any valid plea for the retention of the representation of these boroughs. I must point out to my hon. Friend that he cannot make the disfranchisement of boroughs of under 15,000 or 20,000 inhabitants a matter of principle. The question must be settled by the consideration of what is best to do. My hon. Friend has assumed that three of the seats he would release would go to England, and that the remaining seats would go to Scotland; but the seats he would give to Scotland would considerably disturb the county averages, and that is a matter which must be borne in mind. He says it is easy to make the necessary re-arrangements. It stands to reason that a large number of county divisions would be disturbed. [Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD: Fourteen.] More than 14 county divisions would be disturbed, and a great deal of trouble would have to be taken by the House in consequence. My hon. Friend has said that his proposal would not cause any great or general disturbance of our scheme. That is very far indeed from being the case, for my hon. Friend has left entirely out of account one of the most delicate balances of the whole scheme, and that is the balance between borough and county. He proposes to take 16 borough seats from England, or to reduce the borough representation of England by that number of seats. But, under the Government's proposal, the boroughs and counties of England are represented at the same ratio; therefore, if the Amendment were adopted, there would be a complete disturbance of the ratio as between boroughs and counties. It will be found by anyone who looks through this Bill that the very large counties are better treated than the very large boroughs—boroughs of the same size—but that is a necessity, if we are to keep a general balance between boroughs and counties. We have thought it desirable to make a fair balance between boroughs and counties. The counties of England contain, as proposed by us, 12,506,000 people; and the boroughs of England, as altered or extended by us, contain 12,106,000. We propose 234 county and 226 borough Members for England. The proportion of population in boroughs and counties, under our scheme, is almost exactly the same. The proportion in counties is one Member to every 53,400 people, and in boroughs one Member to every 53,600—almost exactly the same. My hon. Friend would undoubtedly disturb that proportion. By taking away 16 borough seats from England, he would altogether put the English boroughs, as boroughs, in a worse position than the English counties as such. My hon. Friend is not doing what he calls justice to England. He has strongly protested against increasing the number of Members of the House; but he has hardly put clearly before the Committee what it is he proposes by his Amendment to do. He proposes to leave the representation of Ireland at 103, and he proposes to leave the representation of Wales as it is now, Wales being very much more represented than England. ["Hear, hear!"] There would never be the slightest attempt on my part to conceal that fact. Both Wales and Ireland, being over-represented as compared with England as a whole, my hon. Friend proposes to increase the disproportion; he proposes to take 16 seats from England, and leave the representation of Ireland and Wales as at present. Whatever complaint there is to be made against the proposals of the Bill, in this Amendment my hon. Friend intensifies the evil against which some hon. Members have been protesting. It is only necessary that the Committee should clearly see what is the effect of the proposal of my hon. Friend to cause them to reject it.

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, he wished to give the reason why, if his hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) went to a division, he would vote with him. Of course, there was a

good deal in the speech of his hon. Friend with which he could not agree. For instance, the hon. Gentleman objected very strongly to the proposed increase of the number of Members from 658 to 670. Now, he Mr. R. N. Fowler did not see that any valid objection could be raised to that increase. At that moment six seats were disfranchised; and he believed that four others, those for Sandwich and Macclesfield, were to be added to the list. He did not imagine that in future there would be such a reign of electoral purity that boroughs would cease to be disfranchised. Some of the boroughs against which his hon. Friend directed his Amendment were boroughs which, it was well known, were very corrupt. He Mr. R. N. Fowler apprehended that they would continue to be corrupt, and that before long some of them would be disfranchised. In course of time, therefore, it was very possible that Members would be brought down to the normal number of 658. Certainly, in his opinion, Her Majesty's Government had, under all the difficulties of the question, acted wisely in increasing the number of Members to 670. His reason for supporting the Amendment was that, if the limit of disfranchisement were fixed at 15,000 inhabitants, it would be found that the disfranchisement of the boroughs having from 15,000 to 20,000 population would remain an open question; but if no borough remained with a population of below 20,000, the question of redistribution would very likely be settled for a very considerable time. He supposed they were all anxious that this Bill should settle the question of Reform for this generation at least; none of them were desirous that the question should in their time be re-opened. He was aware that some hon. Members sitting on the Benches below the Ministerial Gangway were prepared to advocate manhood suffrage; but that, however, was not the question the Committee were now considering. If the Bill enacted that no constituency with less than 20,000 inhabitants could send a Member to the House, the settlement would, in his opinion, prevail for this generation, and perhaps for a much longer period; if, however, the limit of disfranchisement was fixed at 15,000, he was afraid the question would be re-opened very soon. He should be very glad to see the Amendment adopted, though not on all the grounds stated by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Salford. No doubt, various claims would be put forward against some of the disfranchising clauses of the Bill; but if this Amendment were adopted those claims could be very properly met.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 21; Noes 213: Majority 192.—(Div. List, No. 48.)

VISCOUNT CRICHTON, in rising to move, as an Amendment, the insertion, in page 1, line 13, after the word "Act," of the words—

"Except such boroughs in Ireland as were returned under the Census of 1881, as having a population of 10,000 or over."

said, the object of the Amendment was to remedy, to a certain extent, a great injustice, as he considered it, to the town population of Ireland. As the Bill stood, it proposed to reduce the urban representation of Ireland by 20 Members, or from 36 to 16; and of those 16 one-half, or 8, were allotted to the towns of Dublin and Belfast. He considered that that was not only unfair to the urban communities, but it also contained a great practical danger, as it tended to throw political power in Ireland entirely into the hands of one class of the community—namely, the agricultural class. Even though there were no large towns in Ireland except Dublin and Belfast, it was quite a mistake to suppose that there was no urban element. There was a very large urban element scattered up and down throughout the country in small towns; and those towns, small though they were, had all the characteristics of urban constituencies. They had their merchants and their manufacturers, and their artizan classes, all widely differing from the rural element by which they were surrounded. According to the Census Returns of 1881, the borough population of Ireland—that was to say, the population included in the boroughs which now existed—amounted to 901,454 against a county population of 4,263,844. But that borough population by no means represented the whole of the urban population of Ireland; because, if all the towns having a population of 3,000 and upwards were taken, there would

be an increase to the urban population of 303,735, making a total urban population of 1,205,189, for whom representation ought to be provided. Taking away the population of the towns proposed to be disfranchised by this Bill, the urban population entitled to separate Parliamentary representation would be reduced to 730,284, and one Member would be given for every 45,000. But for the total urban population of 1,205,000 there was only a Member to every 75,000. There were two ways, by either of which this great inequality and injustice might be remedied. One was the plan which would be proposed hereafter by his hon. Friend the Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland), and which aimed at the extension of the system which now prevailed in Scotland and in Wales—the system of grouping the smaller boroughs together. The other plan was the one contained in the Amendment which he (Viscount Crichton) now had the honour to move. He believed that this Amendment had the merit of simplicity, and that it would involve the least possible disturbance of existing arrangements under the Bill. The six boroughs which the Amendment proposed to preserve, but which under the Bill would be extinguished, were Dundalk, Drogheda, Wexford, Lisburn, Armagh, and Carrickfergus. Three of the Members for them could be supplied by taking one from each of the three counties in which the boroughs were situated, and the other three seats could be taken from the already over-represented counties in Leinster. He believed the Amendment, although not a very large one, would go some way towards remedying the inequality and injustice of the Bill, and of which he thought the urban element in Ireland had a right to complain. It was with that view that he made the proposition.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 13, after the word "Act," to insert the words, "except such boroughs in Ireland as were returned, under the Census of 1881, as having a population of 10,000 or over."—(*Viscount Crichton*).

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: There is a good deal to be said, at first sight, for the proposal to keep alive a certain number of the small Irish Parliamentary boroughs at the expense of the Irish counties, because there are so few boroughs in that country. When the first sketch of this Bill was being prepared, I took a great deal of pains to investigate, with the sanction of my Colleagues, the existing condition of the smaller Irish boroughs; and, from the best information that could be obtained, it appeared that a fairer representation was to be got from the counties than from the boroughs, and that there was not any real distinction in the pursuits of the people between the boroughs and the counties. ["Oh, oh!"] I am only giving the Committee the information which we obtained. What we were told was that the small boroughs in Ireland are, as a rule, supported by the farmers; that they have no trade or manufactures; and that even the shopkeepers in these towns are farmers in the counties, as well as shopkeepers in the towns. Such boroughs, therefore, are dependent on the farmers, and have no special or separate interests apart from the counties. The noble Viscount who has made this proposal has given us a list of six of these boroughs. In two cases the population of the boroughs that he wished to save is only just over 10,000, and the population of some of the others is a dwindling population. The population of Armagh is only just over 10,000, and so is that of Carrickfergus. The noble Viscount, when he placed his proposal before the Committee, very naturally did not go into much detail as to where he proposes to get the six seats from. It is very easy to give seats, but much more difficult to sustain a proposal to take seats away. If these six boroughs in Ireland are to be specially and exceptionally saved, the seats must necessarily be obtained from Irish counties. Now, before we consent to make any exception in favour of the small Irish boroughs, we ought to know more clearly from what quarter the seats are to be obtained. The noble Viscount has spoken of six seats to be obtained, one each from Louth, Antrim, and Armagh, and the other three are to be obtained from the over-represented Leinster counties as he calls them. Now, if they are over-represented, they are over-represented by being let alone. It is not the proposal of the Bill to increase their representation; but it is the fact that they have two Members each now,

while they are rather small for two. It is the general principle of the Bill to leave undisturbed the seats of counties which are of middle size. They are left undisturbed in all parts of the United Kingdom; and it is rather difficult to justify a proposal to disturb them, and to take seats from them in Ireland, without also proceeding to take seats away from the over-represented agricultural counties of England. There are a number of counties in England which are very small and which are represented a good deal above the average. If you were to take away one seat from each of these counties in Ireland you would have similar proposals for the agricultural counties of England. I do not know whether the Committee is prepared to open so wide a door as that by accepting this proposal. It is also dangerous for Irish representation generally to open this question. Take the county of Fermanagh, for instance, which is far from being the smallest county in Ireland—there are several smaller—but even the county of Fermanagh, with two Members, is much smaller than the county of Mid Lothian and four or five other counties in Scotland which have but one Member, and which are left alone by the Bill. It would be dangerous to make special provision for these special and exceptional cases, and very difficult to do it in Ireland without making changes in the Scotch constituencies. If a special and exceptional treatment were to be extended to Ireland, I should have thought it would have been better to follow the general lines of the Bill, and take the Members from counties the representation of which it is proposed to increase. That would open a much less dangerous door, though I cannot myself hold out any hope that even such a proposal as that would be considered a desirable one. At the same time, if this general Amendment should be negatived, it would not prevent the raising of one or two cases which hon. Members may desire to bring forward later, where they are cases of boroughs which might possibly be brought over the 15,000 line.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I am very glad to find, in the concluding remarks of the right hon. Baronet, symptoms that he may be able to concede something to the wishes of my noble Friend (Viscount Crichton) in this matter, because it seems to me that, as the Bill now stands, it does deal in a very remarkable way with the borough representation of Ireland. I say this without any Party view of any kind. Whatever Members these constituencies may return, and in whatever part of the House they may sit, it is a matter of some importance that the boroughs of the country, as distinguished from the counties, should have their due representation. That is provided in England, because here we have a large number of large towns; and, notwithstanding the great change that is made by this Bill in the proportion of representation between boroughs and counties, still, owing to the existence of these large towns, the borough population in England will be adequately represented. That is also the case in Scotland and in Wales. They are not countries in which, with rare exceptions, there are any large towns at all. In Wales there is only one county—Glamorganshire—in which there is any large town, and yet in this Bill there is no attempt whatever to abolish the borough representation of Wales. In the same way, although in a great part of Scotland the borough groups consist of very small towns indeed, there is no attempt to abolish the borough representation. Therefore, the borough representation of Scotland and Wales is to be preserved, although in both those countries the towns comprised in the groups are very small, having, as the right hon. Baronet has just pointed out in regard to Ireland, precisely similar interests with the counties in which they are situated, to a far greater extent than is the case in many instances in Ireland, because very often they are no more than mere villages. This Bill preserves, then, in one way or another, the borough representation of England, Scotland, and Wales, and yet it almost entirely extinguishes the borough representation of Ireland, because there are only eight Members, besides those allotted to Dublin and Belfast, who will in future, under this Bill, be Irish borough Representatives. Now, speaking for myself alone, I do not think that this is a fair and adequate representation. I remember very well that some years ago, when I had the honour to hold the Office of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, it fell to my lot to address the House

upon the provisions of a Sunday Closing Bill for Ireland. I objected to that Bill principally on the score of the extreme difficulty, as it appeared to me, of carrying out the provisions of the measure in the large towns; and the right hon. Gentleman who is now Prime Minister (Mr. Gladstone) at once answered me with great force, by pointing to the fact that Ireland was not a country of large towns, and that, therefore, my objection did not apply. It seems to me that in this Bill the Government have really forgotten that Ireland is not a country of large towns, and that yet Irish borough representation ought to be preserved. I do not think it is quite the fact, although I do not presume to offer an opinion as against that of any Irish Representatives—I do not think it is quite the fact, as stated by the right hon. Baronet, that in the smaller Irish boroughs there are no distinct pursuits as compared with the counties. Certainly it is the case that in some Irish boroughs on the sea coast, as in Kinsale, there is a very distinct fishing interest, which would undoubtedly have no representation at all if that borough was turned into the county, because it would be entirely swamped by the agricultural population. In the same way, in the North, there is a distinct manufacturing interest, as at Lisburn, which, if thrown into the county, would be swamped by the agricultural interest. I therefore think that there is some ground for the suggestion made to the Committee that, in some way or other, this blot in the Bill should be dealt with, and some further representation given to the borough population of Ireland than it now receives under the Bill. Whether it should be given by grouping, or by lowering the limit of disfranchisement, is a matter upon which, perhaps, Her Majesty's Government are the best persons to decide; but I will venture to say this — that I do not think we shall come to a satisfactory solution of this question if we attempt to delude ourselves into the idea that we are really legislating equally for Ireland as compared with England, Scotland, and Wales, if we deal with the one country in precisely the same manner as we have dealt with the other three. That would only be a sham, and not a real equality, and it would not bring about that satisfactory and equal result which we should all desire to aim at in the provisions of such a Bill as this. I must say that, so far as my own opinion goes, of the two proposals before us—that of my noble Friend (Viscount Crichton), and that of my hon. Friend the Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland)—I rather lean to that of the hon. Member for Downpatrick. I think that by adopting a certain number of groups—some, perhaps, in the North, and some in the other Provinces—it might be possible to arrive at an adequate borough representation which should not have any Party character about it, but be framed with the idea of representing the urban as distinguished from the agricultural population. That is all I am anxious to see, and I believe it could be satisfactorily accomplished consistently with the number of Representatives allotted to Ireland by the Bill. The Members to be allotted to these groups might be fairly provided, either by taking away the additional Members to be given to the larger counties, or, perhaps, in one or two instances, by lowering the representation of counties to which two Members are proposed to be given. At any rate, in whatever way the matter may be settled, I hope it may receive some further consideration beyond that which it has yet had, and that some attempt may be made to make this a real measure of equality for Ireland.

Mr. HEALY said, that, while he could not go the length of the noble Viscount (Viscount Crichton), he could, at least, understand the motives which had induced him to bring this Amendment forward. But what he (Mr. Healy) was quite unable to understand was the position that had just been taken up by the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach). He understood that right hon. Baronet to represent the Tory Party on the Front Opposition Bench. Who had the arrangement of this Bill in private? Why, the right hon. Baronet and his Party, who had been engaged with the Prime Minister and the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in arranging in secret the provisions of the Bill. He (Mr. Healy), therefore, maintained that the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire was debarred from coming forward now and proposing to make changes in the Bill.

The right hon. Baronet had had his say in Downing Street, if not in person, at all events through the mouths of the Leaders of the Opposition, and having had the dealing of the cards, he could not now object to the way in which the game was being played. The right hon. Baronet could not have two says, one in Downing Street and the other in the House of Commons. He had had his say already, and had inspired the Bill; but the Irish Members, those who were really interested in this question, had had no opportunity of giving any inspiration at all. The first time they saw the Bill was when it was on the Table of this House, and the first chance of their debating it had occurred in the House itself. The noble Viscount (Viscount Crichton) and the Opposition had had their say, and they were stopped from now coming forward in this House and wanting a different arrangement from that of the compromise. The noble Viscount and the right hon. Baronet the Member for East Gloucestershire were "pumped." They had had their say, and their functions were at an end. As for the noble Viscount's proposal, he (Mr. Healy) would admit that he did feel considerable sympathy with the Opposition over the extinction of certain boroughs in Ireland. But there was always this difficulty confronting them—from whence were the seats to be obtained which were to be provided? That was really the difficulty to be met. They would have no difficulty whatever in arranging this matter if the Irish Members of the various contending Parties were only able to put their heads together. Any arrangement they might make which would be satisfactory to the Government would, no doubt, be equally satisfactory to the House. For once, the House would, no doubt, allow them to have that amount of Home Rule, however much the House might like to intermeddle in their affairs in other respects. But if once the Irish Members got into communication as to the boroughs which were to be saved, and as to the counties which were to be their saviours, what would be the most natural proposal? There was the proposal of the Royal Commission—the Hexham Commission—in 1881, in favour of the extension of certain areas in the borough of Drogheda. If the proposal of the Hexham Commission had been carried out, the borough of Drogheda would have been above the limit of 15,000. The same would have been the case with the borough of Lisburn. It was, he thought, grossly unfair that the borough of Belfast should have had rights given to it under the Bill by incorporating the boundary of the Hexham Commission which, if extended to the cases of Drogheda and Lisburn, would have preserved those boroughs. But the Government, for reasons of their own, in that mysterious conference in Downing Street, gave the borough of Belfast that extension, and provided the means of carrying out that extension from the counties of Down and Antrim. Other boroughs in Ireland, if dealt with in the same fashion, would have been preserved. Supposing the Irish Tory Members and the Members of the Irish National Party were to agree that these two boroughs—Lisburn and Drogheda—merited special treatment, then, although they might agree that both these borough should be retained, were they at all likely to agree as to the counties which were to suffer through their retention? He had looked into the facts, and he understood that what the Tories would propose was that as the borough of Lisburn was situated in the county of Antrim, and as Antrim possessed four seats, the borough should be kept alive by taking one of the four seats from the county. Well, they might keep their borough if they liked, and Antrim might be left with the four seats, including that of Lisburn, because the Tory Party would carry her four seats in any event, and therefore that arrangement would do the Nationalists no harm. Then there was the borough of Drogheda, in the county of Tyrone. The Nationalists could carry the whole of the four seats there, for there would be 80 per cent of Catholics in County Tyrone, and it was the lowest populated county in Ireland that was allowed four Members. The Nationalists could carry the whole of the four seats, and it was immaterial to them whether they carried three for Tyrone and one for Drogheda, or none for Drogheda and four for Tyrone. If the Tories were willing to take one seat out of Antrim for Lisburn, the Nationalists were equally willing to take one out of Tyrone for Drogheda. But they did not want any change in the Bill—they were not anxious for any

alteration. They thought it a hardship that a borough like Drogheda, with a population within 250 of the vivifying 15,000 which entitled to a Member, should be compelled to suffer in this way. The borough of Drogheda, within 250 of the right number of inhabitants, was in the unfortunate position of the person who stood at the gate of Paradise—they all knew the quotation—beholding Heaven and enduring Hell. If it had had the same benefit from the Hexham Commission which Belfast had obtained, it would not be extinguished under the Bill. It was a very hard thing that a borough which was a county in itself, which had an ancient Charter, and its own Mayor and Corporation and Sheriff, should be disfranchised, while, if it had had the benefit of the Hexham Commission, it would have been kept alive for Parliamentary purposes. He repeated that this was a very hard case; but the Irish Party did not wish to play ducks and drakes with the Bill as a whole for the sake of a few seats; it would not be their game to do it. But if the Tory Party would lay their views before the Government on this subject, the Nationalists would assent to their proposition, so far as regarded Antrim and Lisburn, Tyrone and Drogheda. But further than that he did not think his Friends could be expected to go. He only gave his own opinion—he had not had the advantage of consulting any of his hon. Friends on the subject—and it was possible that they might be totally opposed to this arrangement. But he gave his own personal opinion, and having viewed the subject in this way he would only say further that he quite understood the difficulty which the Government had had in dealing with the matter, and he did not see how they could make any change in the Bill unless there was practical unanimity among all sections of the Irish Members.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, that when the Amendment proposed by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay) was discussed, the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Charles W. Dilke) laid great stress upon one point—namely, that a reduction in the number of Members for Ireland would be a violation of the Treaty of Union. The proposal of his noble Friend (Viscount Crichton) was one which would prevent an entire violation of the Treaty of Union, as would be seen from the following extract from the 4th Resolution, containing the terms proposed by the Lords and Commons of Ireland:—

"And 100 commoners (2 for each county of Ireland, 2 for the City of Dublin, 2 for the City of Cork, 1 for the University of Trinity College, and 1 for each of the three most considerable cities, towns and boroughs) be the Members to sit and vote on the part of Ireland in the House of Commons of the Parliament of the United Kingdom; that such Act as shall be passed in the Parliament of Ireland previous to the Union, 'to regulate the mode by which the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and the Commons to serve in the Parliament of the United Kingdom on the part of Ireland shall be summoned or returned to the said Parliament,' shall be considered as forming part of the Treaty of Union, and shall be incorporated in the Acts of the respective Parliaments by which the said Union shall be ratified and established."

It was evident from that, that the number of borough Members established was 31; and, notwithstanding that, it was now proposed to reduce them by nearly one-half—if the total number were 32, it would be exactly one-half—it was proposed to leave only 16 borough Members for Ireland. The other Representatives would be agricultural Members. It was then said by the right hon. Baronet that there was hardly any distinction between the population in the small boroughs and small towns in Ireland, and the surrounding agricultural population. Well, he (Mr. Macartney) did not know what the distinction could be. It was well known, for instance, that for centuries Lisburn had been the central place of the damask manufacture. It had a most industrial population, and to say that its people were assimilated to the agricultural population that surrounded them would be as true as to say that the population of Cardiff was assimilated to the colliers and sailors who frequented that port. He could not understand such statements being made. Ireland was usually treated as an exceptional country; but, now, when it suited the convenience of the Government, a hard-and-fast line was laid down, and when a proposal to treat Ireland different to England was made by Irish Members, they were met by this plea—"Oh, no; we cannot do it for Ireland because we cannot do it for England." That was not the position taken up by the Government when they

passed the Bill dealing with the Irish Church, and that was not the position they had taken up when passing other considerable measures. Let them apply the same laws to Ireland as they applied to England—let them repeal the laws they passed for Ireland which differed from the English laws—put Ireland on the same footing as England in all respects, and he would be satisfied. He did not wish, however, to go into this matter at very great length, because he believed that arguing it with the Government was like pouring water into a bottomless tub, and that nothing was likely to result from it. There was concord between the two Front Benches. Irish Members might be listened to, but that listening would be without effect. He begged leave to second the proposal.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, he wished to make just one or two observations with reference to this matter. The hon. and learned Member opposite (Mr. Healy) seemed anxious to enfranchise Drogheda at the expense of Tyrone; but he (Mr. T. A. Dickson) would take care that that was not done. He sympathized with Drogheda in losing its Member, and considered that it was one of those towns very hardly dealt with; but, at the same time, if it was thought desirable to give it a Member, that Member should be taken from the Province of Leinster, which was already over represented. He would point out the difficulties which would arise if the Amendment of the noble Viscount was adopted by the Committee. Let them take the county of Antrim. They heard about the borough of Lisburn; but he would ask what about Carrickfergus, also in the county of Antrim? If Lisburn were enfranchised, and had a separate representation given to it, it was only natural that Carrickfergus should be treated in the same manner. Thus, two Members would be taken from Antrim, and two would remain to represent an agricultural population of 228,000, or one Member to each 114,000. How was Tyrone over-represented with four Members to a population of over 197,000? Why, its representation was one Member to 49,000; and he thought that if Irish counties generally were examined into, it would be found that in several of them the representation was much more excessive. If the proposals of the noble Viscount were adopted, they would take one Member from the county of Armagh, giving the seat to the city of Armagh, with a population of 10,000. In the agricultural districts, therefore, they would have one Member to represent 78,500; whereas the noble Viscount, in his own county, would represent 42,000. The proposal before the Committee would not hold water. If they enfranchised the six boroughs in question, they could do so only at the expense of the agricultural constituencies of the rest of the country, and against that he must earnestly protest.

COLONEL NOLAN said, that up to the present they had had four Ulster Members speaking one after another; consequently, the argument of the Ulster Members was now thoroughly well known. But there were other parts of Ireland to be considered as well. The proposition of the noble Viscount amounted to this—that, practically, they should take away three Members from the three Leinster counties, and hand them over to three Ulster boroughs. ("No, no!") Yes, that was what it would amount to, if hon. Gentlemen would consider the details of the proposal. Hon. Gentlemen who came from the North would like to have as many Members there as they could. If, in this matter, the Committee was to be guided by population, then Connaught ought to have more Members. He did not believe that that Province had its fair share of representation, and yet he did not seek to increase the number; but what he desired to point out in this connection was, that if once they departed from the principle they had laid down, they would not know where to stop. It would be Lisburn to-day, Carrickfergus to-morrow, some other place the day after, and so on. He did not wish Tyrone to lose a Member, and probably he was guided in that matter somewhat by selfish considerations. He had nothing to do with Tyrone; but if they dealt with that county on the principle of population, they would soon be coming to Galway, Mayo, and other counties. He did not see why Tyrone should not be favourably considered, and he believed that they would be just as much taking away a Member from Tyrone by the adoption of the proposal in question as they would be taking away one from Louth, if they gave it two instead of

three. The population interested in this matter had instructed their Members to support the proposal; but if it were accepted, the Committee would be breaking up the agreement come to. He trusted the Government would reject the proposal. If he were advocating such changes, he should put down an Amendment to keep the two Members for the three boroughs, because he looked upon these as the most important towns in Ireland, next to Cork, Belfast, and Dublin. That was to say, he looked upon them as the towns which were most likely to rise. But they could not do that without breaking up the Bill, and he held that it would be most dangerous to take such a step. If they set the House of Lords the example of breaking up the Bill, however slight the excuse might be, the House of Lords would wish to have a finger in the pie. Let them ask themselves this question—when they saw the noble Viscount who represented the Province of Ulster, in which the House of Lords took a deep interest, bringing forward such a Motion as this, how far might they not expect the House of Lords to endeavour to part from the principle laid down in the Bill? If they gave the House of Lords the slightest opening, they would rush in and make all sorts of changes in the Bill. A proposal had been made to the effect that the Irish Members sitting below the Gangway should go into conference with the Ulster Members, and discuss the question; but he objected to any such proceeding. He had always been most anxious to go into conference with the Ulster and the Liberal Members; but there was now no common footing between the Party to which he belonged and the Conservative Ulster Members. Those Members had made a most extraordinary proposal, which, to his mind, ought not to have come from any part of the Committee. They had made, or at any rate supported, a proposal for Ireland to lose Members, and that being so, he could not see how the Party to which he belonged could have anything to do with them. They had set a most extraordinary example, and had done that which, in the old Irish Parliament, would never have been proposed—that was to say, they had tried to reduce the number of Irish Representatives. It was perfectly impossible, under the circumstances, for the Home Rule Members to go into conference with those Gentlemen, because they would always be afraid of proposals being made which would have the effect of breaking up the Bill, and of giving the House of Lords an opportunity of seriously interfering with the Irish representation.

Mr. CORRY said, the hon. and gallant Member who had just sat down (Colonel Nolan) had declared that he and his Friends would not go into conference with the Ulster Members. Well, he (Mr. Corry) did not think there was any fear upon that point, because the Ulster Members were not prepared to go into conference with them. As to Belfast, it was said that it had succeeded in getting four Members; but he maintained that, even without the extension of boundaries, that city was entitled to four, as it had, at the last Census, 207,000 inhabitants, an enormous increase since the previous Census, when the population was only 174,000. That increase was still going on, and without the counties of Down and Antrim, it was quite entitled to four Members. He was of opinion that the proposal should be accepted. If it were not, the small boroughs would be swamped by the rural population in the counties.

Mr. CALLAN said, he very much admired the cool, calculating manner in which the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway County (Colonel Nolan) took up a subject when he had an interest in it, however remote. He (Mr. Callan) had wondered how it was that the sympathy of the hon. and gallant Member extended so far to the North as Tyrone; but the hon. and gallant Gentleman had now let the cat out of the bag, because he had declared that if Tyrone was interfered with and deprived of one of its Members, the county of Galway would be the next victim to suffer. The hon. and gallant Member evidently considered that he had a better chance of being returned for Galway if that constituency had four Members than he would have if it were reduced to three. In reference to the proposal which had been made by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), that they should come to an amicable arrangement, and that Whigs, Tories, Home Rulers, nominal Home Rulers, and Nationalists should agree to some proposal for the restoration of

certain Members, and the reduction of the 15,000 limit, which dealt most unfairly with the Irish borough representation, he (Mr Callan) had never, and he certainly would not now, speak of the Irish borough representation as one that, on the whole, recommended itself to the country for its purity or its honesty But whilst he admitted that, yet, having represented a borough, as he now represented a county, and having no interest whatever in the extension of any borough amongst the non-liberated boroughs of Ireland, he certainly did think that the suggestion that had been made was well worth the consideration of the right hon Baronet (Sir Charles W Dilke) who had charge of the Bill in this House. He thought that the framers of the Bill might, without doing injury to the county representation of Ireland, dock the county of one Member for the purpose of giving it to Lisburn, which was in that county, even if Carrickfergus were included with it If they grouped Carrickfergus with Lisburn, they would amply satisfy those who proposed that one Member should be taken from the county of Antrim and given to a borough, and such grouping would remove all local jealousy. If they did the same in another direction, and restored Drogheda with the Hexham limit, grouping with it the borough of Dundalk, they would get an addition of an independent and intelligent constituency, and one which would truly represent the borough interests of the East Coast of Ireland. He was surprised that the Government did not show some signs of yielding with reference to Drogheda. How was it proposed to act with regard to Warwick? In introducing the Bill, the Prime Minister had said that he would not stand to any hard and fast line with regard to the limitation of the extent of boroughs. Then, why did they adopt the limit in the Bill with regard to Drogheda? If they extended the limit a mile and a-half from the centre of the town—which would be a very fair thing to do—they would get a population of 15,000. Warwick had only a population of 11,800; and yet, in order to enable it to keep its Member, its boundary was extended from five to six miles in one direction, taking in towns which were entirely distinct Warwick, as a matter of fact, had been jerrymandered for a political purpose. But when they came to the Schedules, the Committee would hear a great deal more on this point than they did now. This arrangement reflected no credit on the framers of the Bill. They had jerrymandered the borough of Warwick for purposes which were not creditable to them, and, at the same time, they refused to do the barest justice to the town of Drogheda. It would have been the easiest thing in the world to have extended that borough a thousand beyond the standard. It was, however, of no use appealing to the good feeling of the Treasury Bench, for it was quite evident that they had their arrangements made. He had been very much amused by the speech of the junior Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson.) The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan had said that one Member should be taken from Tyrone and given to Drogheda; and the hon. Member for Tyrone had replied—"I will take good care that you do not," and had said this with all the airs of an occupant of the Treasury Bench. The hon. Member did not sit upon that Bench as yet, and it appeared to him (Mr. Callan) that if before taking his seat upon it, he had to be re-elected, it would not be by an Irish constituency that he would be returned. With regard to Drogheda, that borough had every right to consideration, looking at its population and its industries, and its flax works especially, and generally at its busy and enterprizing character. Even with its present boundaries, it required less than 3,000 people to enfranchise it, and it would easily have been enfranchised if the President of the Local Government Board had treated it with only half the amount of favour with which he had treated Warwick—a borough which had been jerrymandered in order to secure a seat for a partizan of the Government. The Irish Members said that in County Tyrone, where there was a majority of over 40 per cent of Catholics, and where they could return four Members, they would be content with three, in order to give one to Drogheda, even if Dundalk were grouped with it and Carrickfergus were grouped with Lisburn. If the Government would do that, they would please everybody but a few discontented Whigs. Though he could not support the proposal of the noble Viscount, he was in favour of the

compromise he had stated—that was, that they should have an increased borough representation to the extent of two Members, one for Lisburn district, and one for the Drogheda district.

MR. WARTON said, he wished to draw attention to the peculiar character of the Amendment. On what plan did it rest? They had, in the 1st Schedule, a certain list; and on page 14, they had a second list, drawn upon the principle that the boroughs mentioned in the first part of the Schedule should cease to return Members. Then they had this extraordinary Amendment—extraordinary in two distinct ways—first of all, because it went into the question of population. They had been told a great deal about population, and the lines upon which the Government had drawn the Bill; but, as a matter of fact, nothing about population appeared all through the Bill. They seemed to forget that they were only looking at present at a plan, and not really at a finished structure. There was simply to be a list for the purposes of striking out names of places for it. There was nothing on the face of the Bill to show what the population was of any one of the boroughs mentioned in the Schedules. What was being done certainly seemed to him contrary to every sound principle of legislation. He suggested that the best and simplest plan would be to withdraw the Amendment, and strike out of the Schedule the names of the places which were to retain their Members, supposing it to be so decided.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I quite understand the criticism of my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Warton), and I presume there is no doubt that if this Amendment of my noble Friend (Viscount Crichton) were adopted, it would be necessary to make some Amendment afterwards in order to make the Bill complete. But what I understand my noble Friend's wish is, to bring forward his Amendment in the present shape, and at the earliest period possible to raise a point which he is desirous of raising. I understand he wishes to raise the point in such a form as to show on the face of the Amendment what it is he aims at, and what is the object to be gained. The position my noble Friend takes up is, that none of the boroughs in Ireland with 10,000 inhabitants should be disfranchised. There is no doubt that in any Reform Bill or Redistribution Bill which you could pass, you will have a certain number of hard cases—you may have a very large number of hard cases; but when you have to deal with questions of this magnitude, it is necessary that you should, in the first instance, lay down the lines upon which you desire to proceed, and on which you intend to proceed. Whether any exceptions can be admitted to those lines is a subsequent question, and one of a rather difficult and delicate character. But the lines laid down must be clear and distinct. There were several questions discussed when the Franchise Bill was under our consideration last Session, and one of those questions was whether the Bill should extend to Ireland, and the general feeling was that it should. The general principle was laid down that Ireland should receive substantially the same treatment as England, and when Her Majesty's Government were drawing up this Bill, and had laid down a certain line of population below which boroughs were to be disfranchised, they held that the same line should be observed throughout the country, and that the line should be even as between Ireland and England; that whatever figure should be adopted, it should relate to one part of the United Kingdom as well as to another. Therefore, when they had fixed upon the 15,000 limit, they, so I understand, considered that, by the rule laid down for themselves, 15,000 must be the limit both in England and in Ireland. Now, my noble Friend challenges the principle. He does so by laying down another principle—namely, that 10,000 is a fairer figure in the case of Ireland than 15,000. Well, I do not know whether that is so or not; but there must be considerable difficulty, no doubt, in adopting a disfranchising line for all parts of the Kingdom, and it was upon that understanding that, in the conversation which took place with regard to the Bill, Lord Salisbury and myself accepted the proposal that the line should be the same for the two countries, and that 15,000 should be the limit. I do not think it is competent for us, whatever our opinion might be, to depart from the principle so laid down that there should be an even line; but whether there could be any arrangement made or suggested, by which better representation should be given to the

urban populations of Ireland, is a matter upon which I do not wish to pronounce any definite opinion; if any such arrangement could be found later on in the discussion of the Bill, I should be very glad. As I understand the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill (Sir Charles W. Dilke), he does not think it is altogether impossible that some arrangement might be made to meet particular cases. However that may be, the point on which we have now to vote is upon the principle which is involved and freely stated by my noble Friend's Amendment—namely, that 10,000 should be taken as the limit for disfranchisement in Ireland, instead of 15,000, and that is a proposal which I cannot support.

Mr. SEXTON said, he assented to the proposition laid down by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote), that if any fair arrangement for equitably improving the urban representation of Ireland was come to, it might receive general approval. He also thought the right hon. Gentleman had given a very fair and succinct sketch of the history of the present position of this debate. He had told the Committee that 15,000 was understood to be a hard-and-fast limit for representation of boroughs in Ireland; but upon the latter stage of the question—namely, upon the proceeding which led up to the private compact, the right hon. Baronet was somewhat less definite than in the earlier part of his observations. Undoubtedly, the limit fixed upon did work some hardship in individual cases. The case of Drogheda was an exceedingly hard one, when compared with the extraordinary treatment dealt out to the borough of Warwick, in England; because the population of Drogheda was 350 below the 15,000 limit, it was refused separate representation. Now, as a matter of fact, the 350 people could be found in one street in physical contact with the existing boundaries of the borough. Now, the Government had taken the borough of Warwick with its 11,800 inhabitants, and had added to it 7,000 more. Now, that was so bald and so indefensible a contrast that he had no doubt it would form the subject of prolonged debate at a later stage of the Bill. The cases of Limerick and of Sligo, with their 12,000 inhabitants each, were also hard cases. The three boroughs in Ireland which he had specified were boroughs of a class which had interests of their own—trading interests entirely distinct from the rural community. It was a very serious enterprize, he admitted, to set about taking the Members from communities in the counties, varying from the lowest, of the 38,000 in Longford, to the highest limit of 75,000 in Galway, and giving them to urban districts with 10,000 inhabitants. The enterprize might be justified in individual cases; but he should like to see these individual cases very fully proved. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was strictly accurate when he said that, generally speaking, the small towns in Ireland had no large material interests distinct from the agricultural interests, for the farmer depended upon the land, and the shopkeeper depended upon the farmer. Before he sat down, he thought it might be useful, especially in view of the tone of some speeches delivered by hon. Gentlemen sitting above the Gangway, to state that, whatever Party might receive benefit by the disfranchisement of the small boroughs in Ireland, it was certainly not the Party with which he was associated. There were three boroughs—for instance, Drogheda, Limerick, and Waterford—which would lose between them three Members, which Members might safely be counted upon as supporters of the Nationalist programme. The representation of 22 boroughs was to be discontinued, and of these 22 the Nationalists at present held eight, and there was no doubt that, under the new franchise, they would win Clonmel, Dundalk, Kinsale, Youghal, and others; in fact, out of the 22 seats disfranchised, the Nationalist Party were certain to have won 16. Though the hon. Members above the Gangway might not be satisfied with the arrangement of the borough representation in Ireland, it certainly could not be contended that the Nationalist Party had gained any advantage by the arrangement.

Mr. BIGGAR said, no doubt there were hard cases, and that hon. Members would like to put in a word in favour of particular constituencies with which they were on more or less good terms. If he had been drawing up the Bill, he should have drawn it up differently, and pro-

bably more favourably to his own side. He suggested, however, to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill (Sir Charles W. Dilke) that he should resist steadfastly any change in the limit of disfranchisement, because, if he did not, the practical result would be that they would not have done with the Bill until this day next year; if they commenced to make exceptions in one constituency and then in another, they would never have done, because the exceptions would commence in the North of Ireland and end in the South of England. There was not a single constituency in England, Ireland, or Scotland that would not claim some exceptional treatment. This was only the thin end of the wedge, and he impressed it upon the right hon. Gentleman, who understood Parliamentary tactics better than he (Mr. Biggar) did, that if he wished to get through his Bill in a reasonable time, he must put his foot down upon such Amendments as this.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 48; Noes 105: Majority 57.—(Div. List, No. 49.)

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*.

INDUSTRIES (IRELAND).

Select Committee *appointed*, "to inquire into the natural resources and the present condition of Manufacturing and Productive Industries in Ireland, and to consider and report by what means those natural resources may be more fully developed, and how those industries may be encouraged and extended."—(*Sir Hardley Wilmot.*)

House adjourned at half after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 11*th March*, 1885.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—*First Report*—Public Accounts [No. 112].

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Local Government Provisional Orders (Bolton, &c.) * [91]. Municipal Rates * [92].

Committee—Parliamentary Elections Redistribution (*re-comm.*) [49]—R.P. [*Third Night*].

Withdrawn—Industrial and Reformatory Schools (Ireland) Loans * [42].

Mr. Biggar

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) (*re-committed*) BILL.—[BILL 49.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress* 10*th March.*]

[THIRD NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

PART I.

REDISTRIBUTION.

Boroughs.

Clause 2 (Boroughs named in First Schedule to become parts of counties or boroughs).

MR. MULHOLLAND said, he rose to move, as an Amendment, after the word "Act," in page 1, line 13, to insert the words—

"Except such boroughs in Ireland as shall hereafter by the provisions of this Act be grouped together, or grouped with other towns not at present represented, for the purpose of forming borough districts in Ireland."

The object of the Amendment was to suspend the disfranchisement of certain boroughs of Ireland until the Committee had had an opportunity of considering whether some scheme might not be introduced by which the borough representation of Ireland might be increased by adopting a system of grouping something like that which was carried out in Scotland. In the event of no scheme being afterwards adopted the Amendment would be inoperative, as it was proposed simply to suspend the scheme of disfranchisement, so that the Committee would not be in any way committed by adopting the Amendment if it should hereafter be thought fit to disapprove of the scheme now brought forward. He hoped to be able to persuade the Committee that some modification of the proposals contained in the Bill in reference to Ireland were really essentially required. The scheme of disfranchisement, in regard to the Irish boroughs, was carried out to such an extent that it appeared to be in the interests of both Parties that some Amendment should be introduced; and he was glad to perceive, from the tone of the

speeches delivered, both last night and in the debate upon the Motion for the Speaker leaving the Chair, that that feeling was shared by both sides of the House. There seemed to be a general feeling of regret and alarm at the system of Irish borough representation proposed in the Bill. They had been told that this was inevitable, owing to certain broad lines having to be adopted in consequence, he supposed, of the agreement of the Leaders of the two Parties, who had already decided upon the fundamental principles of the Bill; but if it could be proved that the result of the application of those broad lines would lead to consequences that were really absurd and undesirable, surely it was not too late to remedy the evil which would positively arise from not considering the case of Ireland by itself. They were told there was a difficulty, because a compact had been entered into between the two Front Benches. His object at present was, if possible, to conciliate the two Front Benches, and therefore he would conclude that the agreement which had been made, and which was likely to lead to such consequences in Ireland, had been made in ignorance of the effect which the disfranchisement of the Irish boroughs would produce. He did not believe that there was any intention to do injustice to Ireland, or in a permanent settlement of so great a question to be guided only by views of temporary expediency, but as regarded the compact, it appeared to him that it was only a compact entered into between the two Front Benches themselves. A mutual agreement could be got rid of by another mutual agreement; and he thought that when they considered the position the Irish representation would be reduced to by this Bill, it would be felt that, even putting the interests of Ireland altogether aside, the interests of the United Kingdom required that both Parties should join in some arrangement by which a remedy could be provided. He might add that even if the two Front Benches were committed, individual Members of the House were not committed in any way, and he knew that there was a strong feeling on this subject in the minds of many individual Members on both sides of the House. But he did not wish to press that point, because he would rather that the question was settled by a general agreement. They all knew that in that House opinions did not always coincide. That would be an answer to the question of the difficulty that had arisen from the compact entered into upon this question; but there was a stronger one still—namely, that the remedy he proposed did not appear to lead to any way outside the broad lines on which the Bill had been framed. On the contrary, he found a distinct precedent for it in the Bill itself. The Bill included arrangements with respect to other parts of the United Kingdom precisely analogous to that which he now proposed for the adoption of the Committee in the case of Ireland. Therefore, it seemed to him that there could be no difficulty whatever upon the score of inability to break through the broad lines on which the Bill had been framed. The right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) stated last night upon that subject that it had been arranged last year that the Franchise Bill should be extended to Ireland; that the feeling of the House was against the exception of Ireland from the operation of the Franchise Bill, and, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman thought that the House was bound to apply to Ireland the same rules with respect of redistribution which had been determined upon in respect of England. But why that was to be so the right hon. Gentleman did not explain. He (Mr. Mallholland) could see no reason whatever why the lines adopted in regard to England should be applied to Ireland if they could find a better analogy elsewhere. The effect of the present Bill was that in Ireland it led practically to the representation of one class and of one interest. The agricultural class in Ireland was so numerous that in any case that was inevitable. By no fair arrangement—and he asked for nothing that was not a fair arrangement—would it be possible to exclude the agricultural class in Ireland from a preponderating importance, but if it were possible to introduce a counterbalancing element, it would, he thought, be wise to do so. If it were possible in any way to alleviate it, it would be wise to do so. He complained that the present Bill went out of the plain path, not to alleviate this preponderance, and not to diminish it, but rather to exaggerate the anomaly and to increase the pre-

ponderance of this particular class. A year ago, when speaking in the debate upon the second reading of the Franchise Bill, he had stated that he felt there was great danger in the sudden enfranchisement of large masses in Ireland. There was no such danger in the case of England; but in Ireland the numbers proposed to be enfranchised exceeded the whole of the previous constituencies, and they would, therefore, have a complete monopoly of political power. He would say, further, that, from ignorance, or from want of educational advantages, from the fact of their poverty, because, according to the Census Returns, more than one-half of the new voters lived in houses represented to be cabins built of mud, there was great danger; and he hoped that when the provisions of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill came to be disclosed, it would be found that there had been some attempt to guard against the danger likely to arise from such a state of things. In any country it would have been desirable, under such circumstances, to make some provision for the division of classes; but in Ireland it was more than ever necessary, because there was a distinct line which divided different pursuits and different industries, and the effect of this wholesale enfranchisement would be to place political power almost solely in the hands of the class who were intellectually inferior to the other class. His disappointment, therefore, was very great when he found, after the provisions of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill had been disclosed, that not only had no such step been taken, but that the effect of the Bill would be greatly to increase the evil that would necessarily follow enfranchisement. It obliterated the distinction which naturally arose from the difference between a town and a county population. It was stated last night that there were now 36 boroughs in Ireland, and the Bill absolutely proposed to take 20 of them out of the list. Of the 16 that would remain eight were given to the three great towns, so that there would only be eight left to represent the mercantile, professional, and manufacturing interests of the whole of the rest of Ireland. He did not think any hon. Member would defend so sweeping a change in itself. Such a proposal, in fact, could not be defended upon its own merits; and the only defence which had been placed before the House was that it was inevitable owing to the application to Ireland of those broad lines which had been laid down in reference to England. The result was that 85 seats were to be given to the agricultural population in Ireland. He had not a word to say against the enfranchisement of the agricultural population of Ireland; but it must be evident to everyone that in the present state of Ireland, with its subdivision of farms, with its small holdings, and with its congested population, in many respects the agricultural classes, from their individual isolation, were more likely to be led astray by agitators than any other class of the people. There was also a special temptation that could be addressed to them as being connected with the soil, of the gift of the land to the occupiers, so often advocated in Ireland, and as being calculated to follow the guidance of those who promised them revolution and confiscation. Now, he would say that, in any case, the agricultural population of Ireland would require a representation, according to its numbers, of nearly three-fourths; but the present Bill proposed, instead of three-fourths, to give them seven-eighths, notwithstanding the fact that the urban population was one-fourth of the whole, and they all knew that the urban population was more thoroughly represented than the agricultural population, because the unit which conferred the seat was smaller than in the counties. They were told that the principle of the present Bill was to continue the representation of boroughs of 15,000 inhabitants, and to continue a second seat to boroughs of 50,000. That was what was done in England, and was really the principle of the Bill for urban constituencies. Representation was given to towns of 15,000 inhabitants; and seats, therefore, would be actually taken away from larger numbers in the counties than if they had been divided into equal electoral districts. The proposition of the Bill was not to divide the country into equal electoral districts, but to give a fair representation to urban interests; but what he complained of was that that would not be the case in Ireland, because the application of the principle was not suited to the conditions of the country. There had been a proposal to remedy this evil and anomaly by re-

ducing the limit of population; but that proposal had been negatived, upon the ground that the 15,000 allowed was a hard-and-fast line which should not be transgressed or set aside. The proposal he now made was not open to that complaint, because he was quite willing to recognize the limit of 15,000; but he proposed to bring in the population of adjoining towns by grouping them together up to that point, in exactly the same way as was sanctioned by the Bill in the case of Scotland. There were a sufficient number of towns in Ireland to enable this to be done, and quite a sufficient urban population to continue her borough representation. The towns at present represented were not large enough to secure representation if the principles of the Bill were adopted upon the present plan of the Government scheme. The towns of Ireland were comparatively small, because in Ireland trade and manufactures were still in their infancy; but in Scotland trade and manufactures were once in the same undeveloped condition. His proposal, if adopted by the Committee, would enable the Irish boroughs to retain that limit of population which would fairly entitle them to representation, and it was simply carrying out in Ireland the same principle that was already applied to Scotland, and which had worked well. As he had said, it was proposed to be continued by the present Bill; but with regard to Ireland, the measure took away 20 Members from the present borough representation, the borough representation in Scotland being, on the contrary, actually increased by the Bill. He asked, then, why the analogy of England should be taken instead of that of Scotland? He confessed that he was unable to see any reason for it whatever. It was open for Her Majesty's Government to take whatever course they chose, and there was a precedent in the Bill itself for taking either the Scotch or the English system. The advantage of taking the Scotch system, in the case of Ireland, was, he contended, that it was adapted to the circumstances of Ireland, whereas the English system was not. Then what objection could there be? It was not yet too late to adopt the Scotch system of representation on this occasion. Surely there was no special reason why the Irish boroughs should be disfranchised, and he was afraid that the mistake committed by the Government arose from their not having looked fairly into the facts. The effect of adopting the propositions contained in the Bill would be that the urban population in Ireland, which amounted to between 100,000 and 500,000, would be absolutely disfranchised. In the case of the English towns, notwithstanding their absorbtion into the counties, they would still have considerable influence in the representation. In some cases he was told that it was very doubtful whether the urban influence would not actually predominate in the English counties over the rural element; but in Ireland there was no parallel whatever. The towns there were very small, and the agricultural population was very large, and the result would be that when the towns became absorbed in the counties they would have no voice in the representation at all. Nor would it be just, he thought, to disfranchise the artizans, the traders, and all those engaged in different occupations in the towns to this large extent, merely because the town population was scattered, and not concentrated as it was in England, and only reached the arbitrary limit in a very few instances. He did not think that any hon. Member would say that that was either fair or just, nor could it be politic, putting aside mere Party considerations. He did not propose to allude to what was likely to be the result. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) told them last night that the Members returned would in all probability be Nationalists; and that would be so, no doubt, when the urban population found itself swamped by the agricultural element; but the town population was less likely to be influenced by the views of agitators than the rural population, as they had more intercourse with the world, and better opportunities for discussion among themselves. They had also a greater variety of interests at stake, and there was more chance that they would be persons of education and intelligence. By the Franchise Bill they were handing over power to the Democracy. Was it wise, then, to exclude from representation that portion of the Democracy which was likely to be the most intelligent? There were many towns in Ireland in which the intelligence of the people was very high.

There were seaport towns of considerable size, and inland towns also, and in all of them there was a highly intelligent population who would rise above the dead level which was likely to prevail if the constituency was to be all of one class. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) told them that, in his opinion, the interest of the towns of Ireland was so identical with that of the country, and that the trades of the towns were so much connected with the agricultural pursuits of the rest of the population, that he did not believe there would be any great divergence of opinion between the two, and that men chosen to represent the counties might be fairly assumed to represent the towns also. He admitted that that might be so in many instances, and that there were many towns in Ireland where the opinions of the farmers would have great influence upon the minds of the other sections of the population; but there were other towns to which that remark did not apply—for instance, there were the seaport towns such as Coleraine, Carrickfergus, and others, which had trade with other countries and which were not in any way dependent upon the farmers. Then, again, there were manufacturing towns in the North of Ireland which were comparatively large, and were certainly growing—such as Lisburn, Ballymena, Portadown, Newtonards, and Armagh. Those towns had no special farming interests, but they possessed industries of their own, and industries which, in his opinion, ought to be fairly considered and duly represented. The manufacturing towns he had just referred to were, no doubt, not so large as those which were to be found in the manufacturing districts of England, and were not relatively of such importance. That arose from the fact that power-loom weaving was supposed, for a long time, to be unsuited to the manufacture of linen. That industry was, therefore, for a long time carried on by farm labourers and others engaged in agricultural pursuits, and had the effect of increasing the rural population without concentrating the industry in towns. It was only within the last 20 years that the improvements in power-loom weaving had led to the manufacture of linen cloth in factories instead of the cottages of the people, and it was only since that time that the rapid growth of the towns had brought them into importance. There was not the slightest doubt that that growth would still go on; and the manufacturing towns in the North of Ireland even now contained an intelligent, well-educated, and industrious artizan class, who were well deserving of representation. For these reasons he asked the Committee to affirm the principle of the Amendment he had placed upon the Paper. With respect to details as to how far the principle should be carried out, he was, of course, in the hands of the Committee. He did not ask that all the borough Members and all the borough seats should be retained which Ireland now possessed, although it had been pointed out last night that a precedent for that demand could be found in the Act of Union. He had not the slightest doubt, however, that at least eight or nine borough seats might be retained and brought well above the limit of 15,000 population by grouping more than one town together. It was suggested, last night, by some hon. Members below the Gangway, that two groups might be formed combining manufacturing towns—such as Lisburn, in the one case, and seaports, such as Carrickfergus, in the other. He should be glad to see that system adopted, but he did not think that it would be desirable to limit the representation to two groups of that kind. There were over 50 towns in Ireland with a population of more than 3,000. Among them were the important seaport towns and the important manufacturing towns he had named, which averaged about 10,000 each. Indeed, there were several above 10,000 and none below. Those boroughs could easily be formed into groups by combining them with neighbouring towns, and would, in every respect, represent a variety of interests, as well as an amount of intelligence on the part of the inhabitants, which would compare favourably with the groups now being continued in Scotland by the present Bill. As for the seats which would have to be provided being obtained from the counties, he maintained that many of the counties at the present moment were over-represented. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) said, last night, that it would

be dangerous to open that question, because it would be found that the Irish counties were in many cases over-represented as compared with the Scotch counties. But that was exactly the position he Mr. Mulholland took, and was the point he wished to impress upon the Committee. In Scotland the representation was allotted between the counties and the towns in such proportion that the towns got more than their fair share; and if they adopted the same system in Ireland, it would follow that the county representation must be diminished. He need only point to the case of Mid Lothian, and compare it with Fermanagh. Fermanagh, with a very small population, enjoyed two Members, whereas Mid Lothian, with a much larger population, had only one. Why should that anomaly exist? Why should Fermanagh have more representation than Mid Lothian? He thought that by far the best plan, in both cases, would be to divide the representation fairly between the towns and the country. There was this peculiarity with regard to Ireland that in giving to the counties they gave to those who were more than adequately represented, and in taking from the towns they took away from those who were not represented as they ought to be. He had only alluded to Scotland in the course of his argument, because the arguments raised last night had been confined to Scotland; but they had also heard of the grouping of Pembroke and Haverfordwest and of Warwick and Leamington. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Trevelyan), in his speech upon the Question that the Speaker should leave the Chair, said that he could give a satisfactory explanation of those cases, but the right hon. Gentleman forgot to do so. No explanation, however, could be given, and no case could be made out for the grouping of those boroughs, that would not apply, with still greater force, to many of the towns in Ireland. He now left the question with confidence in the hands of the Committee. If they affirmed the principle of his Amendment, he would at once put down the details of his proposal. He hoped that, in deciding upon what might effect a permanent distribution of political power in Ireland, Her Majesty's Government would take a broad view of the question. It was a most important subject, and the most important part of it was the decision as to what would be a permanent settlement, and he feared that in any case the settlement would contain the germ of much future trouble; but if Ireland and England were to have their representation finally settled, he maintained that the present proposal was the only one by which they could hope to mitigate the evils of which he complained. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name upon the Paper.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 13, after the word "Act," to insert the words "except such boroughs in Ireland as shall hereafter by the provisions of this Act be grouped together, or grouped with other towns not at present represented, for the purpose of forming borough districts in Ireland."—(*Mr. Mulholland.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that it would be perhaps right, before coming to an examination of the remarks of the hon. Member, that he should state the intentions of the Government, and the general principle upon which they were proceeding in this matter. They distinctly thought that the extension of the principle of grouping was generally undesirable. That remark applied to the whole of the United Kingdom; and when the hon. Member pointed out that grouping existed in Wales and Scotland, he must say the Government felt that it would be more desirable to limit than to extend the principle, and if there were any question of making a large alteration in the existing state of things it would be in a contrary direction. They did not think, on the whole, that the results of grouping in Wales and Scotland had been so good as to make it desirable to extend the system either in England or Ireland. No doubt, they had shown a certain amount of tenderness to the existing state of things in Wales and Scotland, though it was open to the Committee to consider the principle on which that grouping rested. At the same time, they had made up their minds to resist any proposal for an extension of the principle. In their opinion it would be impracticable to carry out any system of grouping in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman had left his details very wisely

and prudently for a later stage of the Committee, and he asked the Committee to affirm in general terms the principle without entering into the details. The hon. Gentleman, however, had thrown out certain suggestions which showed what was influencing his own mind. He did not want to say anything that might be disagreeable to Members who represented any of the small boroughs; but he thought the Committee generally would be inclined to go with him as far as this—namely, to admit that the towns which it would be necessary to group together in Ireland had not always a community of political views and interests such as would induce them to lead afterwards a very happy life. He was bound to say, after looking carefully into the question of grouping in Ireland, and bearing in mind what towns it would be necessary to join together, that it would be like the grouping of domestic animals of a kind not generally supposed to live happily together. The hon. Gentleman had suggested that towns of 3,000 inhabitants might be grouped.

MR. MULHOLLAND said, he had not made that suggestion. He had mentioned that there were 50 towns of over 3,000 inhabitants in Ireland.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Then the hon. Member had not committed himself to the suggestion that all towns in Ireland of over 3,000 inhabitants should be grouped for the purposes of borough representation.

MR. MULHOLLAND said, he had not spoken of the towns with more than 3,000 inhabitants with reference to grouping at all, but simply to show the extent of the urban population.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE thought in that case he was entitled to complain that the hon. Member was extremely vague, as he had given no indication of the kind of towns he would propose to group. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had supposed that the figure "3,000" meant something, because the borough represented by the hon. Member himself (Downpatrick) was a borough of between 3,000 and 4,000 inhabitants, and he had assumed that the object of the hon. Member was to save towns of that size. The hon. Member had spoken in general terms of the smaller boroughs in the North of Ireland as increasing in population; but he found that the hon. Member's own borough was falling off in population, and had been doing so for some time. It was not the case that, as a general rule, these boroughs were increasing in population. Some were increasing and some were falling off, and the borough represented by the hon. Member was a case of falling off. Then the hon. Member had said that the urban population was likely to be more intelligent than the rural population; but he would be disposed himself to contest the general truth of that assertion, for there were parts of the country—certainly in Great Britain—in which the rural population was at the least as intelligent as the urban population. From what he knew of the miners of Durham and Northumberland, and of the shepherds in the agricultural districts of the Eastern and Lowland parts of Scotland, they would certainly support his assertion that the rural population were quite as intelligent as the urban population. He knew less of Ireland, but his impression was that the agricultural population there was quite as intelligent as the population of the smaller towns. The hon. Member was also discreetly vague as to the sources from which he would draw the Members for the grouping of the boroughs. He had said that eight or nine county seats would be available for the purpose, and might readily be obtained; but the hon. Member had not given the slightest indication of the two-Membered constituencies from which he would take them. The hon. Gentleman must remember that when he came to details he would meet with very considerable opposition from his own Friends in the Conservative Party, because they would be forced to reconsider the case of the smaller English counties, such as Huntingdon and Rutland, if any steps were taken to reduce the representation of the Irish counties. For all of these reasons he thought the Committee would be very much indisposed to accept the proposal of the hon. Member, to which he must certainly himself offer the most decided opposition.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he certainly admired the self-control and commanding confidence with which the hon. Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland) had submitted his proposal to the Committee. The hon. Gentleman had placed it before the Committee in a

most seductive manner, almost after the model of Joseph Surface, for he calmly asked the Committee to agree to the principles of his Amendment, and he would condescend to oblige them with the details at some future time. In point of fact, it was put before the Committee, as a simple matter of form, to accept the principle laid down by the hon. Gentleman. The course pursued by the hon. Gentleman reminded him of a somewhat impecunious tradesman in an Irish town, who confidentially asked the assistance of a friend in the shape of his signature to a bill, and consoled him with the assurance that it was a mere matter of form. That assurance, however, was not borne out when at the end of three months it became necessary that the bill should be met. What was the proposition now made by the hon. Gentleman? He (Mr. O'Connor) was gratified at the firm attitude the Government had taken in regard to the proposal, for they must have known, after what occurred last night, that they must expect no assistance whatever from the Conservative Party on that side of the House, either in the shape of Leaders or followers, towards adhering to the compact which had been made by the Leaders on both sides in reference to the present Bill. They had had a speech last night in which a picturesque and expressive phrase was used about passing the "hard word," and it was said that the Leader of the Opposition had passed the "hard word" to his followers that while he himself would abide by the agreement he had entered into on behalf of his Party, other Members would be at liberty to vote as they pleased with regard to the Amendment of the noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton). "No!"

An hon. Member. Well, at any rate, they did vote as they pleased.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR remarked that certainly the Irish Members of the Conservative Party persisted in taking a division, although their Leader went into the opposite Lobby. A nod, however, was as good as a wink to a blind horse, and hon. Gentleman on the Opposition Benches knew very well that they were at perfect liberty, so far as their Leaders were concerned, to do all in their power to violate the compact to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) was a party. He (Mr. O'Connor) was, therefore, glad that Her Majesty's Government had taken a firm attitude in regard to the insidious proposal which now came from that side of the House, because they must be perfectly convinced that they would get no assistance from the Heads of the Tory Party. The hon. Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland) had laid down the proposition that the urban population was necessarily more intelligent than the rural population. Certainly that was not the case in Ireland. The rural population in Ireland was perfectly conversant with the bearings of all the political questions brought before them, and for the excellent reason that they had had the best task-masters in the world, in the shape of the arbitrary and oppressive coercion they had had to endure from the Party of which the hon. Gentleman was a distinguished Member. There was not a peasant dwelling in his mud cabin who was not a reproach to the Loyal minority, and who had not been driven into the arms of the Nationalist majority by the systematic oppression he had undergone. There could be no doubt that the occupier of the smallest mud hovel in Ireland was perfectly clear as to which side his own interests would lead him in any contest in which he was called upon to take part. The hon. Member said there was no community of interests between the borough and the agricultural population of Ireland. As a matter of fact, there was practically only one interest in Ireland, and it was the agricultural interest. "No!" He would repeat that, generally speaking, there was no interest in Ireland except the agricultural interest. Perhaps there might be one exception, and he would deal with that exception presently; but, in the first place, he would remind the Committee that the exception proved the rule. Everybody knew that the prosperity of the towns entirely depended on the prosperity of the agricultural community. Every shopkeeper in Ireland knew very well that one of the main causes of the bankruptcy of agriculture in Ireland was that the hon. Member and the Party to which he belonged had done their best to drive their tenantry into the Bankruptcy Court. There was a perfect community of interest between the small boroughs and

the agricultural inhabitants around, and that was one of the causes why some of the small boroughs were growing in prosperity. He would take one of the cases mentioned by the hon. Member—that of Ballymena. He knew something of Ballymena. Ballymena had largely diminished in prosperity so far as its manufacturing interests were concerned, but it had largely increased in prosperity because it was the market town, and the people of Ballymena would before long know that their interests were not to be served by that Party which had impeded the progress of agriculture by bad Land Laws. The hon. Member said there was only one interest among the rural population, and he (Mr. O'Connor) had been glad to hear that statement. The rural population consisted partly of labourers and partly of farmers, and he was glad to find the hon. Member acknowledging that their interests were identical. No doubt they were identical, although wicked attempts had been made, in more quarters than one, to convince the labourers and the farmers that their interests were not identical. As the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had clearly pointed out, the hon. Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland) had taken very good care not to enter into detail. There was no plan the hon. Member could propose which would not group the boroughs at the expense of the county population. It would be impossible to group boroughs which did not contain within themselves the most discordant elements, and even grouping would not help the Party to which the hon. Gentleman belonged. The hon. Gentleman said that if the Bill passed in its present shape, no interest but the agricultural interest would be represented; but he (Mr. O'Connor) had pointed out that there was only one great interest in Ireland, and it was the agricultural interest. If there were any manufacturing interest, it was still in the infancy of its development; if there were any commercial interest, it had already decayed, or had still to grow. The only towns in Ireland in which there was any mercantile interest were already sufficiently represented — namely, Dublin, Belfast, Waterford, Limerick, Galway, and Cork. All of those towns were adequately represented already, and to take the boroughs and group them with villages that were entirely dependent upon an agricultural population would not help the boroughs. The hon. Gentleman said that there would be no Representative for what he called the commercial and trading interests of the country. What were the professional interests outside Dublin, Belfast, and the other large towns? Did the hon. Member not know that every barrister in Ireland, practically speaking, had to live in Dublin, and that all the professional interests were centred in that City, and would receive adequate representation by the four Members which the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill proposed to give to the City of Dublin. There were a few solicitors scattered over Ireland, and a few doctors; but he did not think that the whole of them put together would make up one street of a ward in any borough constituency. Yet these were the professional interests which the hon. Gentleman asserted to be inadequately represented under the Bill. The trading and commercial interests, where they existed, were already adequately represented by the seats given to the large towns, and if trading or commercial interests existed elsewhere, they would still be represented. The hon. Gentleman had let the cat out of the bag in his closing observations. The hon. Member had spoken with alarm, either real or affected, of the evils the redistribution of seats would produce in Ireland. The only persons who had any cause to feel alarmed were persons who had hitherto been robbing the people, and who would not be permitted to rob them any longer of their natural rights and interests. What was wanted was the creation of an artificial power by which the masses of the Irish people would be able, in the future, to emancipate themselves from the thraldom of landlord coercion.

DR LYONS said, he must confess that he sympathized very much with the boroughs which were to be extinguished, and he believed that in the future of Ireland it would be found that the disfranchisement of those boroughs would be very much to the detriment of the country. He could not help remarking the large interests which were represented by those boroughs. Many of the

boroughs themselves were of very ancient date, and they had filled a very honourable position in the history of Ireland. Many of them were situated in the North of Ireland, and although he was not particularly familiar with them he strongly sympathized with them on this occasion. There were also boroughs in the South of Ireland which had been connected with very important interests in the past, and which, if Ireland was ever to undergo that large development which he, for one, ventured to hope for it, must again become places of great importance, and of considerable trade. He alluded specially to boroughs circumstanced like those of Kinsale and Youghal. Anyone who had studied the variable condition of Ireland and the relations of that country to the sea, and who looked forward to the development of her fisheries, which ought to be one of the great resources of her national wealth, must see how, in the future, important questions would arise in connection with the development of the fisheries, in which it was exceedingly desirable that those boroughs and all the interests connected with them should be duly represented in that House. He trusted that the investigation of the Select Committee appointed last night, at the instance of his hon. Friend the Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot), would be the means of opening up a new field for the development of the resources of Ireland, and that hereafter there would be very large interests called into existence in connection with the fisheries off the coast of Ireland, acknowledged, as they were, to be a mine of untold wealth, which had never yet been worked at all in the way in which the fisheries of America and of other countries were being worked at the present day. He hoped to see the examples which had been set followed up in Ireland, for it was notorious that there was an extraordinary amount of fish upon the coast, which required but a smaller exercise of the intelligence, science, and knowledge of the present day to supply the markets of this country. It could not be supposed that a rural population, and the Representatives of rural populations, having enormous difficulties to contend with, of which every man must be fully conscious, could by any possibility devote that attention to the sea interests of Ireland which would be devoted to those interests by the Representative of a borough such as Kinsale or Youghal. He believed that some increase of political power should be given to the important districts included within the great county of Cork. While, therefore, he certainly would not consent to any diminution of the political power which it was proposed, by the present Bill, to give that great county, he desired to say that a more natural distribution of the power, so as to take in and include all the interests concerned—the interests of the sea, as well as those of the land, and the development of both, ought to progress *pari passu*, in equal steps, in order to secure the full development of the country. He did not see that there need be any great delay or any insuperable difficulties in adjusting a scheme by which the maritime boroughs around the coast of Ireland might be brought into a system of equal-handed justice all round, to every interest concerned, without sacrificing a particle of the political power it was proposed to distribute throughout the country generally. Without any such sacrifice he felt convinced that the representation of Ireland might be dealt with in a more equitable manner than it was now proposed to be dealt with under the present Bill. Looking forward, as he did, with the greatest hope and confidence to the development of the many interests connected with Ireland, he was bound to admit that he felt very strongly indeed that some effort should be made, even at a little additional sacrifice, to do justice to the boroughs which were situated on the sea coast. There was a great deal to be said for them, and for the advantage they were likely hereafter to confer upon the productive industry of Ireland. He wished to see some plan devised—and he believed that it was perfectly feasible—for giving adequate representation to the important districts in which these industries were centred—industries which must be developed in order to give to Ireland that general prosperity which she was fairly entitled to.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR said, that he had been very much instructed by the manner in which the discussion had proceeded, not only in reference to the Amendment now before the Committee, but on previous Amendments. They had seen hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House rising to propose Amendment after Amendment calcu-

lated to increase or retain their interests in the representation of Ireland; but, judging from the manner in which the proposal for proportional representation was received by the Committee, and judging by the attitude taken up by the Government on the matter now before the Committee, he could not help thinking that these Gentlemen were like drowning men grasping at straws in the political sea. Those best acquainted with the circumstances of Ireland knew that the proposal now made for the grouping of Irish towns for Parliamentary purposes was a proposal which, in the present circumstances of Ireland, was utterly incapable of being carried out. Absence of proximity, in the first instance, would destroy the prospect of carrying out any feasible plan of grouping together the towns or seaports of Ireland. Take the case of Kinsale. It would be necessary to travel 50 miles along the coast before there could be found another community similar to Kinsale, with interests identical and feelings in common with those of Kinsale. Therefore it would be necessary to group Kinsale with other towns that would have no community of interest with it as a seaport town. The inhabitants of these seaport towns did not represent any mercantile or industrial interests; but they represented the people from whom they purchased the commodities they exported to other countries. Therefore the interests of the inhabitants of these towns was indestructibly bound up with the interests of the agricultural community, and those who fairly represented the agricultural interest of Ireland would represent also the interest of the towns. Of course, there might be a few towns in the North of Ireland where there were industrial interests; but he would ask whether a principle was to be destroyed in order to oblige those who would represent these few small towns? Was a further distribution of seats to be carried out in order to satisfy the demands of those who, as he had said, were grasping at straws in the political sea? They had heard from the hon. Member who had just spoken (Dr. Lyons) something about Kinsale and Youghal. Well, he (Mr. O'Connor) had a personal knowledge of those two towns; and he would say, without fear of contradiction, that those who were most interested in these towns had no desire for the separate independent representation the hon. Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland) was contending for. The best men of those localities were quite satisfied that they should be obliterated once for all, and identified with the common interest of the country—the agricultural interest. There was no desire whatever to preserve these boroughs as pet places to be represented by Gentlemen who would have no prospect of being returned by the majority of their fellow-countrymen. They had heard from the hon. Member who proposed the Amendment a good deal about the anomalous state of things the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, as now proposed, was likely to create. With all respect to the hon. Member, the anomaly had been in the past, and the present Bill was only designed for the purpose of destroying that anomaly. The anomaly that existed was the anomaly of seeing Gentlemen like the hon. Member himself returned to represent only a class, and having no interest in common with the people, and no sympathy with them, but, on the contrary, doing all in their power to mar the prospects and destroy the interests of the majority of their countrymen. That anomalous state of things was about to be ended. The hon. Member talked about a revolution that was about to take place in Ireland, and said that the people of Ireland had entrusted their welfare to those who promised them revolution; but he could hardly think it would be regretted—on the contrary, the result would be gladly accepted—if this Bill revolutionized that Party from off the face of the country. They had, in the past, been false to the best interests of Ireland; they had received notice to quit from the Irish people; and if they had now to depart, all he could say was, so be it; for their existence in the position they now occupied was a simple anachronism.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he had listened with attention to the speech of the hon. Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland); and he must say that, if the principle of grouping were to be adopted, the hon. Member had laid before the Committee an absolutely unanswerable case for the adoption of that system in Ireland. There was no part of the United Kingdom in regard to

which a case for the grouping of small boroughs could be as strongly made out as in the North of Ireland; but he rejoiced, with all his heart, that the principle of grouping had been denounced by Her Majesty's Government and that they had now, once and for ever, condemned the existence of that system. He extremely regretted that it was retained in any part of the Bill; but he was glad to find that his right hon. Friend in charge of the Bill had clearly conveyed to the mind of Parliament that the system of grouping boroughs was a system which was certainly not to be extended, and in the next Conservative or Liberal Reform Bill it would probably be abandoned altogether. He was extremely glad that such a declaration had been made. Hon. Gentlemen opposite did not appear to have recognized, or to have been grateful for what their Leaders had done for them. Their Leaders had consented to establish in the United Kingdom a system of electoral districts which was absolutely a new departure from the electoral system hitherto adopted in the United Kingdom. But upon the acceptance of the system of electoral districts the whole plea for grouping boroughs ceased of necessity in Scotland. It could not form part of it. It was [illegible] He was [illegible] always regarded it as one [illegible] their [illegible] representation. One of his [illegible] had always been [illegible] was [illegible] the concern [illegible] county [illegible] glad to find that Her Majesty's Government had now embarked in a system which accepted [illegible]

SIR HERVEY BRUCE [illegible] the Ulster Member [illegible] had [illegible] Leaders [illegible] Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) [illegible] exactly the [illegible] hon. Member himself had [illegible] the Government he professed to support last night. He (Sir Hervey Bruce) was entirely at a loss to understand the principles on which the Government had framed this Bill, and if they were to give weight to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) he thought they ought to have him with them on their side, instead of against them. One of the right hon. Gentleman's main arguments last night against the proposition of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) was that he did not wish to interrupt the proportion which now existed between the county and borough representation, but that he wished them to be as nearly equal as it was possible to make them. But the position in which the Bill left Ireland—if he (Sir Hervey Bruce) was right, and he thought he was—was that for the counties there was to be one Member for every 4[illegible],000 inhabitants, and for the boroughs, including the towns of 3,000 inhabitants, to which his hon. Friend the Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland) had referred, there would be one Member only for 86,000.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE explained that he had not counted the English boroughs in that sense, but he had only counted them as portions of Parliamentary counties. There were many boroughs and urban districts in England possessing a population of more than [illegible] which would simply form part of a county district.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE said, he would give the right hon. Gentleman the advantage of that correction; but it would be found that in the Irish counties each Member would represent about [illegible] persons, whereas the borough Members, including all the towns and urban population, would represent one Member for something like 75,000 persons. (Colonel NOLAN: In Ireland?) Yes, in Ireland. He was not quite sure of the exact number, but it would be more than 75,000. The right hon. Gentleman said he did not like to interfere with the counties or with the boundaries, nor would he consent to group the towns together, or take Members from the counties; but, nevertheless, what was it that they saw in England? In this country the much-abused system of grouping had in reality been increased, and Warwick was now to be joined with the town of Leamington.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE pointed out that Warwick was represented al-

ready, and it was only the creation of an extended constituency. The districts were conterminous.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE asked upon what grounds the right hon. Gentleman made that assertion? Was he acquainted with Warwick and Leamington?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE asked if the right hon. Gentleman was intimately acquainted with, and knew the road between them?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE said, that certainly, if the principle adopted in the case of Leamington and Warwick was not to be regarded as grouping, he did not know what grouping meant. As a matter of fact, it was the grouping together of an existing borough and an unrepresented town, which had never been represented before; so that it was carrying the principle of grouping to an extent to which it had never been carried before. The right hon. Gentleman objected to the proposal on the ground that it would involve the taking away of some of the county Members. The Bill, however, did that already. It took away a Member from the county of Carlow, and in England it took away a Member from the county of Rutland. If they were asking for anything that was not contained in the four corners of the Bill the right hon. Gentleman might say that they were unreasonable; but they were not asking for one single thing that was not contained in the provisions of the Bill. All that they asked was for justice to the urban population of Ireland, which was certainly deprived of justice by the provisions of the Bill now in charge of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman said he did not know a great deal about Ireland; but he had acquired his information from some source which he had not named. The right hon. Gentleman was continually saying, "I have heard so and so." That observation was frequently repeated in the discussion of the Amendment of the noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton). Now, the Committee were not informed what that authority was; but, at any rate, the information was not acquired from the right hon. Gentleman's personal experience, but from some unknown informant. The right hon. Gentleman told them that the connection between the urban and rural population of Ireland was so close and intimate that, as a matter of fact, they represented one interest. Certainly there was a connection, as there always must be, between a buyer and seller; but there was no real community of interest between the city and borough Representatives and the agricultural districts. All the objections taken by the right hon. Gentleman applied to proposals which would be found contained in the Bill itself; and, therefore, he thought they were fairly entitled to press this Amendment upon the Government. As to the arrangement which had been made between the Government and the Leaders of the Opposition, they were in ignorance of what it was. They had heard something about it; but if this Bill was the outcome of it, all he could say was that it was a most unfortunate arrangement for the county in which he lived. That was all he would say. Complaint was made by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) last night that, at a mysterious conference which was said to have taken place, the Nationalist Party had not been represented. Well, he (Sir Hervey Bruce) did not know whether they were represented in the flesh or not; but there must have been some invisible good angel who watched over their interests. Certainly the Province of Leinster was abundantly taken care of. In that Province a Representative was proposed to be given for every 43,000 inhabitants, while Ulster would only have one for every 55,000 inhabitants. It would have been well for Ulster if a similar invisible angel had been present to watch over their interests in the same way as the interests of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) and his friends had been served. One word as to the representation of the county to which he belonged. He regretted that it had not received more careful consideration from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker). What was the condition in which the Bill would leave the county of Londonderry? It would only have one Representative for every 64,000 inhabitants, while the neighbouring county of Donegal would have its representation increased, and would receive a Representative for every 57,000 inhabitants. Let them go a little further away. It was an extraordinary anomaly that the

Province of Leinster should have been so carefully looked after. He found that in the county of Louth there would be one Member for every 20,000 inhabitants. It was unnecessary to enter into the extraordinary discrepancy which these figures displayed—so extraordinary, that in one county there would be a Representative for every 4,000 inhabitants, while in another county there would be a Member for every 20,000 inhabitants. There were many other counties in the same position; but he would not weary the Committee by enumerating the figures. Tipperary was a case in question, although not such an extraordinary case as Louth, and the representation would also be in an anomalous position in King's County, Longford, Westmeath, and Wicklow. In each of these cases there would be an excessive representation over that of Londonderry. He did not know that he had much more to say after the very able and exhaustive speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland). His hon. Friend had clearly shown—and his noble Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Viscount Crichton) had also shown—that what they asked for was a simple act of justice to the urban constituencies of Ireland. It had also been clearly shown—and he defied any Member of Her Majesty's Government to gainsay it—that, in making the proposal, they were not departing from the four quarters of the Bill. Every anomaly (as the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill chose to call it) for which they asked was down in the Bill itself. Everything for which they made a demand, in the name of right and justice for the urban population of Ireland, was provided for in the Bill, and the changes which were introduced into the measure (to say the least of it) were of a somewhat extraordinary nature. He had great pleasure in joining with his hon. Friend in submitting this proposal to the Committee.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE said, he thought the Committee would be of opinion that the hon. Member for Coleraine (Sir Hervey Bruce) had scarcely justified the attack he had made at the commencement of his speech upon the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) because, although the hon. Member spoke of the Party having been abandoned by their Leaders, it must be borne in mind that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), who led the Conservative Party in that House, after having made a speech in favour of the Government, went into the Lobby without being followed by a single Member of the Tory Party. It should be borne in mind that the system proposed by the Bill of single Member districts was a substitute for the system of grouping which the Government, after careful consideration, had condemned, although they were not prepared to do away with it altogether. It certainly was unpopular both in Scotland and Wales, and was a system which certainly ought not to be extended. He therefore hoped that the Committee would not adopt the Amendment. What was the main argument at the root of the proposal of the hon. Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland)? It was that the small boroughs would be practically swamped by the rural districts. He did not agree with the hon. Member that that would really be the case. His own impression was that many of these boroughs instead of being swamped by the Parliamentary Elections Redistribution Bill, would become the centres of county districts in which they would exercise a very important influence. Take the county of Louth. It possessed a population of 75,000 inhabitants, and it would be divided into two districts, in each of which there would be what was now a borough forming the centre—namely, Drogheda and Dundalk—one with 14,000 inhabitants and the other with 11,000. He was satisfied that in the future those two urban populations, being the centres of the new rural electoral districts, would exercise the most important influence in the selection of Members. He, therefore, could not agree that in future those small boroughs would be to any serious extent swamped. The hon. Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland) stated that the voters in the rural districts would be less intelligent than the voters in the small boroughs. He Mr. Shaw Lefevre was disposed to question that assertion, and he very much doubted whether it was the case, especially in all parts in the rural districts of Ireland. From what he knew of the rural population of Ireland he would undertake to say that the small farmers in many parts of the country, possessing

farms of from 10 to 20 acres, were, as a rule, more intelligent than the labouring people in the small boroughs. On the whole, he thought the Committee would do well to reject the Amendment, and to stand by the proposals contained in the Bill.

MR. BERESFORD, as one of the Members whose constituency was deeply affected by the Bill, desired to say a few words on behalf of the borough he had the honour to represent (Armagh). The President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), in his speech last night, alluded specially to the City of Armagh; but he seemed altogether to have derived a wrong impression of that part of the country. The right hon. Gentleman included it with other rural districts, and seemed to infer that although it was a manufacturing centre it was supported only by the farmers and the traders of that locality. Now, he begged to differ from the right hon. Gentleman altogether. The City of Armagh was a city containing more than 10,000 inhabitants, and it was one of the most remarkable cities in the North, or, indeed, in any other part of Ireland. He believed that its history went back beyond that of any other town of Ireland, not excepting Limerick, of which hon. Members below the Gangway had made so much. There seemed to be an impression on the part of the Committee that the city he had the honour to represent was only a small borough, with purely agricultural interests; but he could assure hon. Members that it was a most important manufacturing centre. After what the President of the Local Government Board had stated last night in regard to this city, he felt it his duty to assure the Committee that within a radius of less than a mile of the City of Armagh there were 14 mills at work, employing from 50 to 60, up to 200 to 300 persons in each. He did not think that a city in that position should be spoken of as a rural town, supported solely by farmers and traders who occupied the land there. Of course some few of the merchants had farms, as they had in other parts of the country. Many of them had small holdings—pleasure farms and such like, where they kept their cows; but beyond that they were principally, if not entirely, dependent on the manufacturing industry of the city. The Bill now before the Committee preserved the proportion of representation between the urban and the county constituencies in Great Britain; but it ignored that principle altogether in the case of Ireland. He wanted to know whether that was so? Why should there not be the grouping of boroughs in the manufacturing towns of the North of Ireland, just the same as in Scotland, and as was proposed to be carried out in the special case of Warwick and Leamington? Why should Warwick and Leamington be specially converted into a joint borough when the borough interests in the North of Ireland were entirely ignored and neglected? He could assure the Committee that the boroughs to which he alluded felt their position very acutely. They felt that they were being left in the lurch, and that their interests had not been considered by those who ought to have looked most particularly after them. The Bill, as it now stood, threw the whole representative power into the hands of the agricultural population, and entirely set aside the manufacturing population. Any man who had gone through Ireland and had seen the South, as compared with the North, would draw a very favourable comparison of the North as distinguished from the South. An hon. Member who spoke just now from below the Gangway seemed to take a Southern view altogether of the question; but hon. Members who knew Ireland well were well aware of the difference which existed between the two portions of the country. Indeed, it might almost be said there were two Irelands—the agricultural Ireland in the South, and the manufacturing Ireland in the North. He saw that almost every day of his life when he was engaged in travelling in Ireland. He very frequently went to the South, and what did he see? The South was a different country altogether, the houses were of a much poorer class, and there was not the same amount of cleanliness and thrift displayed as in the North. When he returned to Armagh he saw a totally different state of circumstances. In point of fact, throughout the North of Ireland, there was a vast improvement in the condition of the people; their homes and their social position were quite different from what they were in the South and West. Instead of dis-

franchising the manufacturing centres in the North of Ireland, he should have thought it would have been the duty of the Government, if possible, to enfranchise them more largely than had hitherto been the case. They fully deserved enfranchisement. It was there that capital was expended, and employment given, which was not the case in any part of the West or South of Ireland. No manufactures had held their ground out of the North. He would give an instance. He remembered some years ago, in the county of Leitrim, that an English Company came over and established smelting furnaces. The Company did well for some time, but one of the employés engaged in keeping up the furnaces allowed them to go down. He did not keep the heat up to its right pitch, and he was consequently reprimanded and his wages stopped. By way of spiting the Company, he allowed the furnaces to go out altogether, and he was then summarily dismissed. Within a week afterwards the manager of the works—Mr Cox—was shot at his own bedside, whereupon the Company gave up the works and left the country. To this day these smelting furnaces might be seen there, falling into a heap of ruins. The same thing occurred in the West of Ireland at Loughallan, in the county of Leitrim. Some tin-making works were established there and did very well, but when the Home Rule agitation was set on foot, pressure was put upon the Company to pay money advances which had been made to them, and the only alternative left them was to give up the undertaking and abandon the works. Let them compare that state of things with the manufacturing industries in the North of Ireland at Lisburn, Lurgan, Portadown, and Armagh. In all these places thousands of men were employed in manufacturing processes, and were doing well. Then, was it wise to disfranchise such constituencies and reduce them to the same condition as the populations in the South and West of Ireland? Was that the object with which the Bill had been introduced? If the Amendment which hon. Friend the Member for Dunpatrick (Mr Macdonald) had moved went to a division, he should have the greatest pleasure in voting for it. He firmly believed that their bounden duty was to promote the general interests of the country, as well as to improve and develop those manufacturing industries in the North of Ireland, and not, as had too often been the case in regard to the South and West, to adopt a course of procedure which must result in getting rid of them altogether.

Colonel NOLAN said, he could quite understand the gallant stand which was made by the Representatives of the small boroughs in the North of Ireland. Those boroughs were about to be disfranchised, and they naturally felt they should have their say. If in their criticism of the Bill hon. Members had gone a little too far, or if their statistics had been a little highly coloured, the Committee would be sure to have some consideration for them. He had no doubt, however, that some of the hon. Gentlemen would find one of the larger constituencies framed by the Bill prepared to return them. But the peculiarity about this movement was, that it was almost exclusively confined to the Northern districts of Ireland; it was the Northern Members who advanced all the arguments in favour of taking away a certain number of seats from the counties to give them to boroughs. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Armagh (Mr Beresford) drew a very deplorable picture of the representation there would be under the Bill of the manufacturing districts of Ireland. No doubt Armagh was a very fine district; but he (Colonel Nolan) really did not think its manufactures would suffer if instead of having one Member for 16,000 inhabitants, as at present, the town shared representation with 30,000 or 40,000 of the rural population around the city. He had heard it said that the town of Sligo had greatly progressed since it was deprived of Parliamentary representation. There had been less fighting between the two factions, and that had had a very salutary effect. He could not agree with the hon. Member for Armagh (Mr Beresford) that if the six boroughs named by the Amendment lost their Members they would very probably lose their manufactures. But the boroughs did not lose their representation, they only lost their extra portion of representation, because they would get under the Bill their average representation. They would be part of a population of 70,000 who would vote for one Member. He denied that the manufactures of the

North of Ireland would lose representation. Belfast, the great manufacturing town, had now only two Members; it was, however, to have four, a clear gain of two. The counties of Armagh and Antrim would return between them four Members, and in the return of those Representatives the manufacturing populations scattered up and down the counties must have a voice. It was well the Committee should examine the proposition of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland), and see if it was the outcome of any real grievance. The proposition of the hon. Gentleman was not that the boroughs should get a fair share of representation; it was not asked that boroughs in Ireland should be grouped together until the total population came up to 48,000 or 50,000; and that that population should be entitled to return one Member. If that were the proposition, there would be a good deal to be said in favour of it. But the supporters of this Amendment wanted to have a Member for every 15,000 or 20,000; it was not quite certain whether hon. Gentlemen would declare for 15,000 or 20,000 as the limit. It was pointed out last night that if they gave a seat to one place they would have to take it away from another. Why should the counties, such as Queen's County, King's County, and Westmeath, which had been divided into districts of 38,000 inhabitants each, lose a Member, in order that urban places in the North, with 15,000 or 20,000, should retain separate representation? He could not see that such a suggestion was at all fair. It had been often stated in the course of the debate that under the Bill towns would lose representation. As a matter of fact, he thought all the small country towns that had not got Members at present would be enormous gainers by the Bill. The small towns in his own part of the country, for instance, would be great gainers. At present there were only two Members for the county of Galway, and two for the county of Mayo; but under the Bill the two counties would return between them eight Members. The towns had great influence in the election of the Members at present; but when the number of the Representatives was doubled their influence would be enormously increased. There would not be more than one or two towns in each electoral division; but those towns would become the centres of all electoral movements, and, being the centres, they would have great power in the formation of the opinions of the country voters. There was no jealousy between town and country; but the people of the rural districts were willing to submit to the guidance of the shopkeepers, and the people they met in the markets. He should say that the influence of the small towns in the West of Ireland—in Galway and in Mayo—would be vastly increased; for it would in future bear so much more directly on the constituencies, inasmuch as they would be political centres, instead of being one of six or eight towns, as they were in the present constituencies. Therefore, for any town which did not now possess separate representation, he considered the Bill would be very useful and valuable. One great objection to acceding to the proposition of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland) was that it was dangerous to make alterations in the Bill in face of the existence of the House of Lords. He was afraid that if the Commons made any great change in the Bill, and they sent it up to the House of Lords in June or July, when there might possibly be some great complication in the East, the House of Lords would send it back, containing other innovations; and then the House of Commons would either have to accept the Lords' innovations or sacrifice the whole work of the Session, and go back to the old constituencies. This was a Bill which had been agreed upon by the Leaders of the two great Parties in the House—by the Prime Minister, and by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote). Certainly, the Irish Members below the Gangway were not consulted in the settlement of the details; but they had been told by the hon. Member for Coleraine (Sir Hervey Bruce) that there was an angel in the conference guarding their interests. They were, of course, much obliged to the hon. Gentleman for the intimation; but, after all, they would have preferred to have been represented in the flesh. However, the House was in the very strong position that they had the Leaders of the two Parties pledged to the Bill; and, therefore, it was impossible to introduce in the measure any important innovation. If the Amend-

ment of the hon. Member for Downpatrick Mr Mulholland were adopted, it was quite possible that the House of Lords would go further, and manipulate the Irish representation in such a way as would be positively injurious to the interests of the people. In what he had said he was supported by a very valuable precedent. Hon. Members knew that the House of Lords introduced in the last Reform Bill the principle of the three-cornered constituency, and they might attempt something of the kind on the present occasion if the House of Commons evinced any anxiety to disturb the settlement arrived at. If this proposition, however, was rejected, he did not think the House of Lords would make any great protest so far as Ireland was concerned. One argument was advanced by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Dublin (Dr Lyons); and if he (Colonel Nolan) thought it was founded on fact it would have great weight with him. The hon. Gentleman (Dr Lyons) said great injustice would be done if the representation of the fishery interest were extinguished, and he suggested the fishermen should be grouped together in a way that would preserve their representation. He (Colonel Nolan) thought it was important that the fishing community in Ireland should be represented; but that would not be secured by the adoption of the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Downpatrick (Mr Mulholland)—indeed, he thought that Amendment would do injury to the interests of the fishermen. "Oh, oh!" He saw the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Dublin (Dr Lyons) dissent; but let them take, as examples, the constituency of the hon. Gentleman, and the constituency which he (Colonel Nolan) had the honour to represent. They were very different constituencies, but they were both very large, and very typical in relation to the fishery question. There were many fishermen in the county of Dublin, but they were at Kingstown—they were in the rural parts, and not in the towns. There were none in the City of Dublin. In his (Colonel Nolan's) constituency there were many fishermen, indeed, he believed there were some registered fishermen in the county of Galway. These men, however, were scattered all over the county of Galway, and were not located in large numbers in any given place. He should think that at least half of them would, under the new franchise, have votes; and, therefore, they would be able to wield some influence in the divisions to which they were assigned. He should think that in future the Member for Kinsale might be regarded as a direct representative of the interests of the fishing community, and two or three of the Irish Members would be very largely interested in fishery questions—that was to say, if they did not take up in the House a proper position on fishery questions, they would stand little chance if ever they appealed for a renewal of the confidence of the electors. Furthermore, two of the Members for Galway would necessarily be very largely interested in fishery matters. If they grouped these boroughs he did not know where they would find one borough, with the exception of Kinsale, which really represented the fishing interest. The real fact was that the fishermen of Ireland did not live in towns as the fishermen of England did; but they were scattered up and down the coasts in little villages. In Galway they did not even live in villages, but on small detached farms, scattered over the whole coast. In the county of Down, also, it would be impossible to group the fishermen so that they would make up a good-sized constituency; but they were, nevertheless, numerous, and would have a very appreciable share in returning the Members for the county in the future. Wherever they went on the coast of Ireland they would find the same state of things—namely, that the fishermen lived outside the towns. He quite admitted that the case of Kinsale was an exceptional one. Fishermen either lived in large towns such as Belfast, Cork and Galway, or in villages, or on detached farms along the coast. He did not think that the Bill would hurt the fishermen, but, on the contrary, be of immense advantage to them. In Galway, at present, he did not think there was on the Register one fisherman in any one division; and he had no doubt that the same would be found in other counties. In about 20 constituencies the fishing interest would, under the Bill, be very formidable indeed, and, therefore, any remodelling of the Bill in the direction of grouping boroughs together so far from being favourable to the interests of fishermen, would, in his

opinion, be hurtful. The Committee ought to be very chary of Amendments such as the present, because if they were to set the example of introducing innovations there was no knowing what the House of Lords would do with the Bill.

Mr. EWART said, there was much force in the taunt of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) that the Ulster Conservative Members were deserted by their Leaders. The best thing those Members could wish was that their Leaders would continue to stay away that day, for if they were present at the division he had no doubt they would be found in the Lobby against the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland). If, in the conference which was held between the Heads of the two great Parties in the House, there was a good angel representing Ireland, he was sorry to say that that good angel had little regard for the welfare of the manufacturing districts of Ireland. The hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) made very little indeed of the manufacturing districts of Ireland; he spoke of the trading and manufacturing population as a mere nothing, and scarcely to be taken into account at all, contending that Ireland was solely an agricultural country. In the main, Ireland was an agricultural country; but it, nevertheless, had great trading and manufacturing interests. They had the well-known linen trade, in all its branches; they had cotton industries; shipbuilding; in fact, they had no end of trades prospering, some of them more or less, and others springing up. There was an adaptation in the North of Ireland for manufacturing which did not exist elsewhere; and his contention and that of his hon. Friends was, that the manufacturing interest was almost overruled by this Bill. There were to be four Members for Belfast, who might very fairly enough represent the manufacturing interests; there were to be four Members for Dublin, who might very fairly be taken as Representatives of the professional and other classes and of the trading interests; and there were to be several borough Members, who, it might be said, would represent the trading interests. So far as he could see, the manufacturing interests would only be directly represented by the four Members for Belfast. He might instance several manufacturing places which were altogether ignored by the Bill. There was Armagh, which they had heard from the hon. Member for that city (Mr. Beresford) contained within its district 14 mills; there was Ballymena, which was a very large centre of manufactures, containing something like 10,000 inhabitants; then there was Lisburn, one of the most ancient towns in Ireland connected with the linen trade, with 10,000 of a population; Lurgan, a town of 10,000 people, largely increasing and very prosperous; there was Portadown, than which no place was more prosperous; Coleraine was a large manufacturing place; there were Carrickfergus and Strabane. These were all manufacturing or trading places, not to speak of Omagh, Enniskillen, and Newry. He maintained that the Bill was doing a great injustice to those places. The interests of the manufacturing portions of Ireland had been sacrificed to the uniform rule of which the Committee had heard so much. The disfranchisement of all places with less than 15,000 people might be all very well for England; but it would work out extremely unfairly in Ireland. He completely sympathized with the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland) in favour of the grouping of boroughs; and he was very sorry to hear the speech which the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who had charge of the Bill, made on the subject. His (Mr. Ewart's) opinion was that the grouping of boroughs would have met the difficulties of the case, and that it would have applied with equal fairness to the South as well as to the North of Ireland. He understood that at the conference between the Members of the two Front Benches the subject of grouping was one that was discussed, and that the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) put his foot down very strongly against the proposition to group boroughs in England. As he (Mr. Ewart) had said, the disfranchising provisions of the Bill might not work any injustice in England; but they certainly would work the grossest injustice in Ireland. He spoke without any hope of success on the present occasion; and he feared all that he and his hon. Friends could do was to protest against the disadvantages which the Bill would effect

with regard to the representation of the North of Ireland.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON said, he was glad the Government had determined to reject the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Macdonald). The acceptance of the Amendment would lead to endless complications, for it would cause the re-opening of the whole Irish portion of the Bill. Knowing something of the political history and life of Ulster for the last 25 years, he could only say that nothing could possibly have been more surprising than to see the Ulster Conservative Members that day turning their backs upon their old friends the farmers of the Province of Ulster. The hon. Member for Downpatrick spoke of the danger of enfranchising the agricultural population of Ireland, and said that the influence of that population ought to be counterbalanced by the keeping up of a number of the small boroughs in Ireland in which the artizan classes held sway. What were the charges made against the agricultural population? Why, that the agricultural community were inferior in intelligence and education to the people dwelling in towns. If the hon. Gentleman had taken the trouble to read the statistics in the possession of the House he would see that in point of education and intelligence the people who resided in the counties of Ireland were quite equal to those who lived in the small boroughs. Anyone who knew Ireland must admit, if they were prepared to speak out their mind frankly, that the grouping of boroughs would not only be very unpopular, but unsuccessful in its results. Although the hon. Gentleman the Member for Downpatrick addressed the Committee for 40 minutes, he gave them no idea of how the grouping he proposed was to be carried out, he did not give the Committee a particle of information as to where the Members were to come from for the boroughs he proposed to group. But from hints which were thrown out last night it was evident that some Members of the Conservative Party had fixed their hands upon taking one Member from the county that Mr. Dickson had the honour to represent. He supposed that that was the outcome of the negotiations which had been going on for the past four or five days between the deputation from the North of Ireland and the Leaders of the Opposition. Tyrone was fairly entitled to four Representatives in Parliament, and it was impossible not to refer to the generosity of hon. Gentlemen, who, in order to enfranchise a small borough like Lisburn, would deprive Tyrone of one of its Members. Their generosity brought to one's recollection the couplet about an old Irish squire who

> "Ignorant of his beauty,
> Had gone far beyond at the expense
> of the county."

He (Mr. Dickson) and certain other Ulster Members were determined that small boroughs in Ireland should not be enfranchised at the expense of the counties. His hon. friend the Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons) referred to the advantages of grouping boroughs like Kinsale and Youghal. He (Mr. Dickson) considered that the interests of the fishing community of the borough of Kinsale were quite safe in the Kinsale division of the county of Cork. As a matter of fact, the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. John O'Connor) entirely disposed of the arguments put forward by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Dublin. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Armagh (Mr. Beresford) pleaded that that city should be allowed to retain its separate representation. If the small boroughs were to be retained he (Mr. Dickson) could plead for another borough in Ireland, the borough of Dungannon, in which he had some interest, a borough whose voice was heard in the House with very considerable effect at a great crisis in the history of Ireland. But he believed that neither Dungannon nor the City of Armagh were afraid of committing their commercial interests to the division of the county of which they formed a part. He hoped they would hear less of interfering with the Irish portion of the Bill, and that the Government would stand firm and keep the Bill in the shape in which it had been framed.

Mr. MACARTNEY said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, and who shared with him the representation of the county of Tyrone, was sometimes terribly afraid—he was the other day—of a mistake in his name (Mr. Macartney). Now, whatever dislike the

hon. Gentleman might have to that, he (Mr. Macartney) could assure the hon. Gentleman he would be equally annoyed if he were to be mistaken for him (Mr. Dickson). The other day hon. Members below the Gangway were referring to some remarks made by the hon. Member for Tyrone, when the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Dickson) cried "the junior Member." The hon. Gentleman repeated the interruption about 20 times, at which he (Mr. Macartney) was very much surprised. He did not think anybody would fall into the mistake of supposing that a speech made by the hon. Member was made by him (Mr. Macartney), or that a speech made by him (Mr. Macartney) was made by the hon. Gentleman. At all events, their constituents would never make such a mistake. The hon. Member had said that he was rejoiced that the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who was conducting the Bill, had put his foot down resolutely against any alteration of the Bill. Now, when the hon. Member put his own foot down resolutely yesterday, and declared that he would not allow any Member to be taken from Tyrone, he (Mr. Macartney) presumed the hon. Gentleman possessed an intimate knowledge of the length, breadth, and weight of the right hon. Baronet's foot. He believed that the reason why the hon. Gentleman was quite ready to sink the borough of Dungannon in the county of Tyrone was that he knew full well that if an election were to take place upon the present constituencies he or any of his family would not be returned for that borough. He (Mr. Macartney) had the honour of representing Tyrone in conjunction with the hon. Gentleman, and he had always ridden upon one horse perfectly straight. [Mr. T. A. DICKSON: Oh, oh!] He defied the hon. Gentleman to prove that he had done otherwise; he had insinuated it, but he had never been able to prove it. But the hon. Member reminded him of a performer in a circus, who had one foot upon one horse and one foot upon another horse—the hon. Gentleman rested one foot upon the Radical electors of Tyrone, and the other upon the Nationalists in the same county; and he thought that by sometimes leaning gracefully one way and sometimes the other way he could conciliate both Parties. He was afraid that what happened sometimes to the circus-rider would happen to the hon. Gentleman—that when he took a leap through one of the hoops he would find he had landed between the horses. He (Mr. Macartney) did not wish to allude to language used by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, because he did not care to bandy bad words with his fellow-countrymen—["Oh, oh!"]—he was quite aware hon. Gentlemen did not acknowledge him as a fellow-countrymen of theirs. But the hon. Member for Galway Borough (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), in concluding his speech, turned round and, looking fiercely in the direction in which he (Mr. Macartney) and his hon. Friends sat, accused the Ulster Conservative Members of being robbers—["Oh, oh!"]—robbers and robbery were the words used. He knew that strong language in the House had become so common of late that it was now almost impossible for the Chairman of Committees or for Mr. Speaker to stop it. Personally, he did not expect good taste always from the quarter whence the remark he had referred to came; but he consoled himself with the old proverb that "it is very difficult to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear." Passing from that topic, he wished to allude to what had been said by the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold). The hon. Gentleman said that the Ulster Conservative Members did not seem to be penetrated by the situation which existed between the two Front Benches. They were penetrated to their very marrow by that situation. They understood it so well that they were disappointed and disgusted with it; but that was no reason why they should not, at least, put forward their title to consideration. They certainly did not expect much consideration from the Ministerial side of the House; but they thought that the champions of the Constitutional and Conservative cause would not forget those who had always stood by the Crown and Constitution of this country. They would not cease to do so; but, at the same time, they could not help expressing their deep disappointment and disgust at the compact that their Leaders had entered into with the Government. Now, as to the Amendment before the Committee, a good deal had been said by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway Colonel Nolan as to the unreasonableness of the demand involved

in that Amendment. It was supposed that the promoters of the proposition under consideration wanted to rob other parts of Ireland of their representation. They wanted to do no such thing. The hon. and gallant Member had acknowledged that the Province of Leinster was over-represented, as compared with the three other Provinces. Was he mistaken? Colonel Nolan. I did not say so. The hon. and gallant Member said the other day, that the Province of Ulster was not the only Province that suffered, or was under-represented, as compared with Leinster. That was their case. Mr. Macartney and his hon. Friends maintained that Connaught and Munster were in the same position as Ulster, for whereas they had only one Member for every 70,000 people the Province of Leinster had one Member for every 45,000 people. They were puzzled to make out the reason for Leinster being treated in such an exceptionally favourable manner. They had been unable to get at the cause. They were told that there was no wish to disturb the Articles of the Union, but he showed last night that the 4th Article of the Union was violated by this Bill. That Article provided that the Irish boroughs, to the number of 31, should be represented in the House of Commons. But by this Bill the number of represented boroughs was to be cut down to 15. That argument therefore, fell to the ground. What was the next? Why, "We must treat you exactly as we treat England, Scotland, and Wales." Did they do that? He denied it. What he and his hon. Friends asked for had been done in England, Scotland, and Wales. Scotland and Wales had already groupings of boroughs, and, therefore, they did not ask for it, and even by the present Bill it was proposed to group the boroughs of Warwick and Leamington. It was true the Government had the audacity to assert that Warwick and Leamington were really one place. He never heard that asserted before. He had always thought that Warwick and Leamington were separate and distinct places. He always understood that Leamington was a place like Cheltenham—a village-town, but now it had been discovered that Warwick and Leamington were one place. If it was wrong, and a breach of the agreement, and not in consonance with the principles of the Bill, that one place should be joined to another so as to make one large borough, he asserted that it had been done, or was projected to be done, with the Bill, and he did not see why it should not be done in Ireland as well as in England. A rather remarkable trail had been drawn across the path by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons), though it was not intentional on his part. Some years ago they used to hear a good deal of the "three F's"; now they only heard from the hon. Member of two—forests and fishermen. The hon. Gentleman seemed to have a great desire to re-afforest Ireland; and he also seemed to think that the only boroughs in Ireland were those where fishermen lived. He (Mr. Macartney) agreed with the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway County (Colonel Nolan), that, generally speaking, the fishermen of Ireland lived on the coast; that they were half farmers and half fishermen; that they spent most of their time ashore, but that they did not live in boroughs. He did not consider that, except in a place like Kinsale, they made up a large constituency. He thought they were a class who might very fairly be merged in county constituencies. He and his Friends were as anxious that fishermen should have their interests represented in Parliament as other Members were. It seemed to be suspected that they wanted to have Members for Ulster at the expense of other places. They wanted nothing of the kind. All they wanted was to have, with Connaught and Munster, as great a share of representation as was given to Leinster by the Bill. They maintained that Ulster, with a population which exceeded that of any other Province in Ireland, was entitled to representation equivalent to its population. Let Ulster have its fair share of representation by means of grouping boroughs. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway seemed to be alarmed at the Amendment, because, if it were adopted, it would give six seats to the Representatives of the robbing landlords. Those hon. Gentlemen imagined there were no loyal people in Ireland except landlords, but he could assure them that if it ever came to a stiff fight, they would meet in the field many others besides landlords. He said the other day that the Loyalists of Ulster

were not afraid, and his words were misinterpreted. He was reported to have said that the people of Ulster were not afraid of the increase which would take place in the representation of the Irish Nationalists. He never meant that. They were afraid of that, and they did not like it, because they considered they had been robbed of their rights. But as to being afraid of the Nationalists as a body of men, as to being afraid of being turned out of the country, they only said—"Come on and try us." He hoped that the arguments which had been used by those who had advocated this simple measure of justice to the inhabitants of the manufacturing and industrial boroughs of Ireland would weigh with hon. Members opposite. But he was afraid that, however much those arguments might weigh with hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Liberal Benches, the division would not be influenced. Perhaps, in conclusion, he might be allowed to relate a little story to show how independent the occupiers of the mud hovels were, and how intelligently they would vote. [Mr. KENNY: Is it a true story?] It happened to himself. In 1873 he was a candidate for the representation of Tyrone; and on one occasion, when he was proceeding from his residence to Five Mile Cross to address the electors of the county, he met half-way the Rev. Mr. M'Ilroy, parish priest. Mr. M'Ilroy was a man with whom he was on the best of terms, and the rev. gentleman said—"Where are you going?" He said—"I am going to make a speech at Five Mile Cross;" whereupon Mr. M'Ilroy said—"Take me with you." He (Mr. Macartney) was a little taken aback by the request, because he was the candidate of the Orangemen of Tyrone; and he thought that if the parish priest were seen in his wagonette his chances of election would be completely damned. Mr. M'Ilroy said—"Don't you be afraid; I'll do you no harm," and got in the conveyance. Several speeches were made to the meeting, and at last Mr. M'Ilroy rose to speak, and, to his (Mr. Macartney's) great astonishment, commenced his address by saying—"Protestants and Presbyterians." The rev. gentleman frequently addressed the people as "Protestants and Presbyterians," until he (Mr. Macartney), getting alarmed, pulled him by the sleeve, and said—"Speak to your own people." He turned round, and said—"Leave me alone; I am all right." As a matter of fact, Mr. M'Ilroy made a capital speech in favour of his (Mr. Macartney's) candidature. At the conclusion of the address he (Mr. Macartney) asked—"Now, will you tell me what is the reason you would not speak to your own people?" and the reply he received was—"My dear friend, the other men have to be convinced; my people vote just as I tell them."

MR. SEXTON said, that reference had been made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Tyrone (Mr. Macartney), to Warwick. If hon. Gentlemen thought that any process of grouping had gone on in reference to Warwick they were under a great delusion. Grouping meant the joining together of places which had an intervening space; but the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macartney) must find, if he took the trouble to ascertain the facts, that no such process had gone on in the case of Warwick. What had been done was simply to add to the existing Parliamentry area—partly urban and partly rural—another similar area which adjoined. There was certainly no question of grouping. Now, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macartney) need not be alarmed of being mixed up with his Colleague (Mr. Dickson) in the representation of Tyrone. No one would be so foolish as to take a speech delivered by the one as a speech made by the other; and there were few people who would mistake a speech made by either of them for a speech made by any third person. Now, the hon. Gentleman who had last addressed the Committee (Mr. Macartney) had taken upon himself a position for which he was not qualified by nature or training, and that was the position of censor in that House in the matter of good taste. The hon. Member had accused hon. Members sitting below the Gangway of being guilty of bad taste in the references they had made to other Members from Ireland; yet surely he himself was guilty of a most glaring piece of bad taste when he quoted the ancient aphorism about a silk purse and a sow's ear. If the hon. Gentleman doubted that the name was applicable to any Gentleman of his order, he would invite him to go into the Library and look at the Blue Books, and examine the proceedings of

the Irish Land Commission. He understood that when a man appropriated that which was the property of another the word "robbery" might be applied to him and to other persons than the Irish landlords had been robbers. He sympathised with what the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) had said in regard to the Irish Party—that the Leadership had fallen into contempt. Last night the Irish Members had indulged in the wild delight of rebellion, and that day they were learning that rebellion had its disadvantages and its risks. Some of them appeared to be unaware that a compact had been entered into; others had admitted its existence; but to what a condition of genteel comedy had the argument of the question been brought when they saw last night the Leader of the Conservative Party, followed by the whole rank and file of the English Conservative Members, go into the Lobby against them. The hon. Member for Armagh (Mr. Beresford) either did not know what he wanted to prove, or he could not prove it so much. He commenced by making a plea for Ulster, but his argument resolved itself into an argument that one Ulster county differed from another, because, if his speech meant anything at all, it meant that he was desirous of making a difference between the counties of Cavan and Armagh. It appeared to him that an argument of that sort did not rise to the height of national dimensions. The hon. Baronet the Member for Colchester (Sir Hervey Bruce) was not, as Michael Cassio was, a great arithmetician, and it was very dangerous to handle figures unless one was a skilful craftsman. The hon. Baronet said that each Member for County Louth would represent only 26,000 people; but he would advise him to go back to the Blue Book, and, if he did so, he would find that the towns of Drogheda and Dundalk had been added to the county of Louth. That would add to the county a population of 21,000, so that each Member for the county would represent 26,000. The hon. Baronet was as indifferent in his facts also as he was in his figures. He had soared into the realms of imagination, and talked about the good angel that guarded the Nationalist interests in the private Bill Law. But he (Mr. Sexton) might say that, so far as the general impression in Ireland went, never the interests of the National Party were considered in a conclave of English Ministers, the supernatural influence presiding over it was altogether of another kind than that of angels. The hon. Gentleman who made this Motion (Mr. Middleland) appeared to him to be very much too ingenious, and a great deal too good for a place like this, where the sharper faculties of the human intellect were, perhaps, unduly developed. He appeared to possess a good deal of the character of the Vicar of Wakefield, and a good deal of the hopefulness of that distinguished clergyman, which arose, in a great degree, from an imperfect appreciation of facts. The hon. Gentleman asked the Government and the Committee to group Irish boroughs. Well, the Nationalist Members were as anxious for the grouping of Irish boroughs as he was, so long as the process was carried out with firmness. But the hon. Gentleman forgot that they were in Committee considering, not principles, but details; and he had not told them these two essential and indispensable facts—namely, what towns he intended to group, and what counties he intended should find the seats. The hon. Member seemed to think that the Committee had adopted a system common in judicial matters in Ireland, of finding the verdict first and considering the evidence afterwards. They had all heard of a certain compact, and all he could say was this—that if the Irish Lords listened any more to the voice of the charmer, the noble Viscount the Member for Fermanagh (Viscount Crichton), as they did last night, and followed him into the Lobby, in opposition to the Conservative Leader and the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill (Sir Charles W. Dilke)—if they had any more of these idle Amendments and these fruitless and hopeless debates the right hon. Baronet would have a perfect right to go to the Marquess of Salisbury, and say to him—"You entered into a compact which you appear to have neither the political power nor the moral force to execute."

Mr. KENNY said, this Amendment seemed to him to be entirely unjustifiable. The hon. Member who moved it asked the Committee to take a leap in the dark. He wanted them to approve of a principle without putting any practical scheme before them. And as soon

as he had concluded his speech his Colleagues had followed him, with a view of showing that the people of Ulster had been treated badly by the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill; but, on the contrary, he (Mr. Kenny) considered that the people of Ulster had been singularly well treated by that Bill. After that Bill had been passed into law Ulster would be represented by 33 Members; and he desired the Committee to compare those figures with those of Connaught. They would find that, whereas the 400,000 people of Ulster would have 33 Members, the 800,000 of Connaught would only have 15 Members. Therefore, the arguments of the hon. Members who had supported this Amendment were utterly worthless. At the present time, under this Bill, there would be something like four or five of the Ulster boroughs disfranchised. The hon. Member who moved this Motion represented one of those boroughs; and he presumed the hon. Member desired to have it grouped with some other boroughs. It only had a population of 3,000 people, which was a very small borough. There was no borough in Ireland which had so just a claim to consideration, in addition to Drogheda, as the borough of Lisburn; and he thought that those who were responsible for that which he would mention might almost be charged with an attempt to commit fraud. The population of the borough of Lisburn was last Census considerably under 15,000; but when he looked at *Thom's Directory* he found that, whereas the population of other boroughs in Ireland was put down under the Census of 1881, the population of Lisburn was put down in 1883 at exactly the required number of 15,000. He should like to know who it was who had used his influence with the managers of *Thom's Directory* and induced them to alter these figures, in order to deceive the Government in regard to this Bill. It was absolutely impossible to group boroughs in Ireland. A scheme of grouping had been suggested in regard to Ireland in a Private Bill which an hon. Member had brought in, and in that measure it was proposed to connect with Limerick the boroughs of Ennis and Carlow. Now, Ennis was about 40 miles from Limerick, and the two boroughs had not the slightest interests in common. He believed that if this Amendment were adopted, it would be found that any proposal for grouping the hon. Member might make would be as absurd and senseless as that which had been made in the Private Bill he had referred to. He hoped the Committee would throw out the Amendment by an overwhelming majority.

MR. LEWIS remarked that, after the speeches that had been made by several hon. Members on this subject, he did not think he would be justified in detaining the Committee for any length of time; but still he could not help referring to two points that had not so far been very much touched upon. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) and the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) had proceeded rather upon the *non possumus* argument, and had said that the scheme that had been put forward that day entirely subverted the scheme of the Bill—namely, which was drawn upon the principle of anti-grouping. They knew that they had in Scotland one of the worst systems of grouping which existed in the entire Kingdom. What was the reason of it? He turned to the Papers, and he found that the Lord Advocate, representing the Government, intended to place all the existing groups of Scotch burghs in Schedule I.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): No, none.

MR. LEWIS said, he was sorry the Lord Advocate interrupted him. He found that the Ayr district was to be disenfranchised, that the Kilmarnock Burghs, that the Falkirk Burghs were to be disenfranchised, and the Elgin, Stirling, Montrose, Inverness, Wick, and Cromarty districts of burghs were to be treated in the same way. ["No, no!"] Perhaps hon. Members would not be quite so eager if they would only wait to see what followed. Nine district burghs were to go to Schedule I., and when he read that Amendment he said—"Surely the Government are going to be consistent; they have a strong objection to grouping in England and Wales, and they are going to abolish it in Scotland." But, on turning to another page of the Amendments, he found that nine district boroughs were to be created by the Government. This was the action of the

Government that found itself unable to consider the present proposal, because it was alleged that it would subvert one of the leading principles of the Bill, which was to do away, as far as they could, with distinct boroughs. These Amendments were on the Paper in the name of the Lord Advocate. This was the consistency of the Government! They destroyed the present system of grouping, and created an entirely new one, which they thought they could make acceptable. Yet the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold), who was alternately kicking and petting the Government, congratulated them that they had once and for ever condemned the system of grouping, and said he hoped they would hear no more of it. The way they got rid of it was to disturb the present system of grouping in Scotland in nine cases, and to substitute another system which they hoped would be defensible. That was an illustration of the consistency of the Government. They objected to the principle of grouping, and, therefore, this Amendment, which was opposed by the President of the Local Government Board.—

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said the hon. Member had three times stated that he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had opposed grouping principles; what he did say was that they did like grouping, and they would rather diminish than increase it, and that they thought its extension inopportune for reasons that were given.

MR. LEWIS remarked that if there had been so much pressure put upon the Government as had been put upon them by the Irish Members the results would have [illegible] At any rate, the Irish [illegible] that the system of grouping was so roughly bad. Last year and a [illegible] case was regard to Warwick, and it would be interesting to learn why a large town [illegible] Leamington was to be joined to a small and insignificant place like Warwick. He supposed they would hear something from the Government at some time or another. Anybody who knew what Warwick and Leamington were [illegible] that they were one and the same thing. He should be glad to answer the taunts which had been thrown out to the Ulster Members with regard to the so-called compact, and he ventured to make one prophecy, which was, that there would never be another compact made, such as had been entered into between the two Front Benches with regard to this Bill. He did not suppose that either party to the compact would just fly in the consequence, which was a public evil, that the hands of Members on both sides of the House should be absolutely tied. What were they there for if they were not to discuss these matters? Why did they go through the farce of allowing the Chairman to make use of the Chair if there was to be no real freedom of action? He denied that they were acting, in any ordinary sense of the word, in rebellion against the Leaders with whom they usually acted. At any rate, they hoped that their Leaders would not desert them in this division. It was true that the Ulster Members were a very small, and it might be a diminishing body; but they were there to defend their own interests, and he thought it was far too common a thing on both sides of the House to listen patiently to tirades from below the Gangway. He did not think this was the time to play into the hands of the Nationalist Members of the Irish Party, when the Press of that Party was treating with disloyalty to the Crown and the Members of the Royal Family. Irish Members think that the Ulster Members should hide their diminished heads while the Nationalists were doing everything they could against the Royal Family. He might tell them that there was one part of Ireland where Royalty would not only meet with loyal, but, if necessary, physical support. The Nemesis that would overtake the House in [illegible] the increased power this would place in the hands of the Nationalists would be an unmeasurable fight, over and over again, on the floor of that House, for the repeal of the Union with all its consequences. The Irish landlords had [illegible] in their individual [illegible] the consequences of what was [illegible] generous system of legislation for Ireland. The House was generous at their expense. It was a generosity that came out of the pockets of the Irish landlords. The measures by which taxes were supposed to have been [illegible] for the good of the Empire, [illegible] without the slightest compensation having been given to the Irish landlords. Irish Members were constantly saying

that the Irish Protestants were the cause of all the mischief and trouble in Ireland. That was much the same as what they said when a collision occurred between the police and the people. It was always held in such cases that if there had been no police or military there would have been no rioting—that was to say, he supposed, that the mob should be allowed to carry out its designs without interference. So it was in Ireland; and he ventured to say that if it had not been for the Protestant minority, every evil, every form of disloyalty—he would not say crime—would have been rampant. It was because the Protestants were always supporting all that was loyal and good in the country that hon. Members below the Gangway said—"Oh, if it was not for the Protestant minority there would have been no disturbance." Irish landlords had been allowed to be stigmatized as robbers, and that was thought to be within the privilege of Parliamentary speech; but to his mind it was disgusting that such a charge should be made against men who, in many cases, had had to sacrifice their absolute means of existence for what was called the public good. When they asked for compensation the Prime Minister came down there with smooth words——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is departing too far from the Amendment before the Committee.

MR. LEWIS said, he was merely replying to attacks which had been made from below the Gangway; and if they happened again he was afraid he would have to come under the ban of the Chairman once more, because he thought they ought to be answered.

MR. TREVELYAN said, it was impossible for Members of the Government to remain silent when an hon. Member attempted to turn the debate into a question between loyalty and disloyalty. He begged hon. Members to consider that this was not a question of loyalty of Parties in Ireland, but a question of the details of the Bill. The Government were determined that they would not treat Ireland differently from England and Scotland. Hon. Members opposite must have been present at the debate on going into Committee, when the Government were vindicating the Bill against the attacks of hon. Members below the Gangway, who stated that it did injustice to the National Party; and in the same way the Government were now vindicating the Bill against hon. Members opposite, on the ground that it did no injustice to the great number in Ireland who were opposed to the National Party. He begged hon. Members who belonged to either of those Parties to consider that in the long run no good would come by attempting to give any Party in that House an unfair advantage in the Irish constituencies by arranging them in a manner which did not commend itself to the House on general grounds. By pursuing any such course of conduct they would give the Nationalist Party in Ireland a real grievance; and the great object of the Government and of the country ought to be to give Ireland no real grievance whatever. Now they were told that the voice of the disfranchised towns was no longer to be heard. The hon. Member for Downpatrick (Mr. Mulholland) said they were to be absolutely disfranchised. The principle of this Bill was that while by merging boroughs they might remove boroughs from the borough list, they would give them, perhaps, exceptional influence by making them the centres of larger districts. Indeed, they would in many cases have a much larger political influence than they possessed when they remained boroughs. The hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) had taunted his right hon. Friends with having created a great number of Scotch groups, and he took exception to the statement that grouping was not a principle of the Bill. It must be recollected that in a Bill of this description they must look to its general tendency; and there could be no doubt whatever that the general tendency of the measure was adverse to grouping. His right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate had not created a single additional group. Not one single additional group had been created in Scotland; not one single town had been made into a borough which was not a borough before, and a very large number of towns had been merged into counties, and had ceased to be boroughs altogether. The only ground that hon. Members could have to make a statement that this Bill was a grouping Bill was afforded by the single case of Warwick; and he believed that hon. Members, if they inquired into the matter, would admit that that was not a group. The boroughs of

Warwick and Leamington had five miles of common frontier on which they touched, and the very essence of grouping was that the frontier should be separated. Hon. Members opposite had spoken with a certain amount of bitterness with which he had some degree of sympathy, although he did not agree with them. They complained that they had been felt in the lurch, and that their interests had been neglected, by those who ought to have looked after them. He thought that these sort of complaints ought to remind statesmen that they should be extremely careful in making promises. Hon. Members opposite had been thrown over by their Leader, not, however, by any action which the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote) took recently, but by the action which he took 18 months ago during his visit to Ulster, and which had been extremely regretted by the right hon. Gentleman since. The Leader of the Opposition had made a speech on Irish representation, which made the Government very cautious as to how they touched on Irish representation; for he told the assembled Conservatives that if justice were done according to the number of electors Ulster, instead of having 29 or 33 Members, he did not remember which, as at present, ought to have 44; and he also told them, in words that could only have this signification, that Connaught, with its enormous population, ought only to have 15 Members as against 12 for Belfast. The basis on which the right hon. Gentleman founded his argument was the number of present electors. People who listened to that sort of speech in excited Party meetings did not go into the argument by which such statements were supported, and he thought at the time it was very much to be regretted that hopes were held out to the Conservatives of Ulster which, in calmer moments, the right hon. Baronet knew could not be fulfilled. The right hon. Baronet was no doubt carried away by the circumstances of the moment; but now, sitting on the Front Bench, he was acting as a statesman, and he was obliged, when he came to review this question as a patriotic statesman, to come down very much from his previous promises and help in bringing forward and advocating before the House a scheme which, whatever might be said, he was convinced the more the House examined it the more they would find it was drawn up without any reference to Party or creed in Ireland, and with the one intention of doing justice all round.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) should have reserved his reply to a speech delivered 18 months ago by his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition to an occasion when he was unavoidably absent. Had he been present, he would no doubt, have been able to give a full and sufficient answer to the long bottled up impeachment. He must go farther, and say that if Her Majesty's Government were anxious that the Bill should proceed with the full support of the Front Opposition Bench, or even the general support of that part of the House, they must defer replying to speeches made by their political opponents 18 months ago to a more auspicious occasion. The Bill had not been delayed by speeches from that part of the Committee, but by the allies of the right hon. Gentleman below the Gangway; and if, in addition to that sort of delay, they were to be driven upon occasions to reply to partizan speeches from Cabinet Ministers, he did not know when this Bill would pass through the House; and, for himself, he was disposed to agree with what was said by his hon. Friend the Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), that it was not likely that compacts of that sort would be repeated in future. No doubt, on the present occasion there was a compact; and when the right hon. Gentleman talked so glibly of fulfilling their share of the contract, he begged to say that the most important part of the compact, so far as the Conservative Party was concerned, was accomplished and fulfilled when the House of Lords passed the third reading of the Franchise Bill. That he took to be an undoubted fact. As to what the right hon. Gentleman had said as to the principle of the Bill, he could not understand why the Government regarded the formation of one or two groups in parts of Ireland or Scotland as necessarily hostile to the principle of the measure. The right hon. Gentleman said he looked with disfavour on the principle of grouping, while another right hon. Gentleman had said that if they looked at the whole construction of the measure, they would find that it was hostile to the

principle of grouping. But, for his part, he could not see, with regard to Scotland, that the Bill was altogether hostile to grouping. Now, in regard to Ireland, no doubt, there were practical difficulties in the way of forming any substantial system of grouping boroughs; but he did not understand that his hon. Friends who proposed this Amendment were in favour of any very large principle of grouping. But they thought that, in one or two cases, the system of grouping might be advantageously adopted. If it was true that Her Majesty's Government considered that the principle of grouping in Ireland, carried out to however small an extent, was in hostility to, and in derogation of, the compact or agreement which was entered into between the two Leaders of the Conservative Party, the moment that was stated, he, for one—and he spoke for nobody but himself—should feel bound by the declaration. He should, however, press upon Her Majesty's Government the further consideration of this question. If the Government said that they regarded the question of grouping in Ireland as opposed to the essence of this measure, and that they could not accept any proposal as to grouping, however limited in extent, he, for one, should be bound to support Her Majesty's Government in opposing that Amendment; but he earnestly hoped, in the interests of peace and of the future progress of this measure, that they would receive from the Government an assurance that they were prepared to consider proposals of this moderate nature.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE remarked, that he had already addressed the Committee on this subject; but as the noble Lord had made a rather distinct appeal to the Government he would repeat what he had stated. He had told the Committee that day that it was impossible for the Government to accede to the proposal for grouping in Ireland; but last night he had said that if there was any general concurrence of opinion in favour of the views then supported, that one or two Irish boroughs should be increased by the addition of suburbs, that was a matter which he thought should not be shut out, but ought to be considered in Committee when they reached the Schedule, and that it was a matter which might very properly receive the attention of the House. He thought it only courteous to the noble Lord to repeat that statement.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked if that was not impossible, on account of the compact?

MR. CALLAN said, he thought the outburst of loyalty on the part of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), and the simulated passion with which it was delivered, would have been more in season, and would have come with greater force, if it had come from him on one of his platforms, and had it been addressed to that one of his standard-bearers, during his election campaign in Derry, who declared, on the same platform as the hon. Member, that he would kick the Queen's Crown into the Boyne. He opposed the Amendment for two reasons. In the first place, because the hon. Member who moved it (Mr. Mulholland) had not put on the Paper the names of the towns he proposed to group; and, secondly, because he was opposed to the principle it involved. The Postmaster General, in the course of his short speech on this subject, showed an utter and deplorable ignorance in regard to the effect which the Bill would have in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman, in arguing against the principle of grouping boroughs, stated, as a compensation, that they would exercise the preponderating influence in the counties in which they were merged. But what was the fact? There were two boroughs to be merged in the county which he represented—Dundalk and Drogheda. What would be the effect? They were at present represented by two thorough-going Whigs; but the county of Louth would never be disgraced by being represented by Whigs. They would only be represented by thorough-going Nationalists. He should be very sorry to see the borough of Portarlington impregnating with its corrupting influences Queen's County and King's County. He was glad to hear that it would never impregnate the county he represented with its corrupting influences. In like manner, he should be sorry to see Kerry corrupted by the Whiggery of Tralee. He desired to know from the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, or the right hon. Baronet Sir Charles W. Dilke, that the limits of the borough of Drogheda had not been extended, seeing that they had extended Warwick to a

distance of five miles from the centre of the town. Why, in regard to Drogheda, had they refused to extend the boundary, on the principle laid down by the Hexham Commission? Had the Government been guided in these matters by political exigencies or political jerry-mandering? On what principle could they allow the borough boundary of Warwick to be extended five miles, and refuse to allow the borough of Drogheda to be extended a quarter of a mile—particularly when the borough of Drogheda came to within 348 of the 15,000 limit, and Warwick wanted as many as 4,000, or, at all events, more than 3,000? If they enfranchised Warwick, they would commit a gross injustice if they did not, at the same time, and by the same Act, enfranchise Drogheda. He thought that, instead of having this subject constantly recurring, it would be well to give some explanation as to the causes of the enfranchisement of Warwick and the drawing of a hard-and-fast line in the case of Drogheda.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, it would be out of Order for him, at the present moment, to argue the case of Warwick in detail—it would be encouraging a discussion which would be entirely irregular. He had already answered questions with regard to Drogheda, and had stated that if the circumstances of that town were considered by themselves it would be a question whether this place ought not to be treated exceptionally. As it was, when they came to deal with the case, they would have to consider it very carefully. Applications had been made from various parts of England similar to those referred to by the hon. Member.

MR. LEWIS said, he did not think it would be right to pass this question by. The case of Lisburn was exactly similar; and he did not see how it was possible to discover the circumstances of Drogheda, as well as those of Lisburn, from the case of Warwick when that came on.

MR. HICKS said, that before the question was put he wished, as an English Member, to be allowed to say a very few words on this Amendment. On a former occasion, hon. Gentlemen forming the Party below the Gangway had claimed the right to be heard after the House had been occupied by English and Scotch Members for some considerable time. Well, this debate had been carried on that day entirely by Irish Members, or Members connected with Ireland; and he, therefore, thought it but right that an English Member should be allowed to say a few words. Last night one of the most eloquent Members belonging to the Party below the Gangway had said that he hoped this question would be debated without Party feeling. He (Mr. Hicks) was sorry that that hope had not been realized that day. They had heard language in that House that ought not to have been uttered there—language which had been cheered by hon. Members below the Gangway; and he thought that the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) was only within his right when he protested against it. The question really before the Committee was the question of grouping. For his own part, he had felt for years that that was the one way of solving the difficulty. He thought that this grouping with regard to Ireland would be a fair and just proceeding. They had it from the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold), that if the system of grouping was to be adopted at all, Gentlemen representing the North of Ireland had made out a very strong case for its application to that part of the United Kingdom. What he wanted to know was, and his only reason for rising was to ask the Government, whether they were or were not going to put their foot down on grouping, because in this Bill the Committee found, notwithstanding the chronic smile of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), that the Government were not only maintaining but extending the system, in spite of what had fallen from the right hon. Baronet. The Committee had to consider not only the question of Warwick, which had been so prominently brought forward, but they had also to consider the question of Pembroke. They found that under the Bill Pembroke was to be joined, not to the town running alongside of it, but to the town of Haverfordwest. They saw there two towns grouped together, apparently for the purpose of securing a seat to a very faithful follower, the present Member for Pembroke (Mr. W. Davies). If they were to have the principle of non-grouping let it be

stated clearly and distinctly; and let it be done generally, and not applied here and there. He said this—that if they were not to have a system of grouping in the future let them not have it now. Let them not have another of those points left over for future consideration—another point added to that of the Universities which the right hon. Baronet told them the other night was to be brought up again on the first opportunity. He should have liked to know whether this was another part of that great compact and agreement, the conditions of which were to be open for reconsideration and reversal on the first opportunity? If this was a point to be reconsidered as soon as ever the Government could get out of this unfortunate alliance with the Opposition, he should like to know how many other parts of the Bill were to be torn to pieces as soon as the measure became an Act?

MR. DEASY said, he could not remain silent after the answer of the noble Lord (Lord John Manners). He had been under the impression that the compact that they had heard had been entered into between the Government and the Tories existed down to the present time. It appeared now, however, from what they had heard from the noble Lord, and from a statement which had been made on behalf of the Government, that that compact was virtually at an end. ["No, no!"] The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) appeared to dissent from that view; but he (Mr. Deasy) believed the right hon. Baronet had approved of the words of the noble Lord when the noble Lord had said that the Conservatives were released from this treaty when the Franchise Bill had passed the House of Lords.

LORD JOHN MANNERS said, that what he had intended to convey was that the major part of the compact on the Conservative side was accomplished by the passing of the Franchise Act by the House of Lords—not that the compact was itself at an end.

MR. SEXTON asked whether he was to understand from the noble Lord that the Conservatives, by allowing the Franchise Bill to pass, had carried out their part of the treaty? ["No, no!"]

MR. DEASY said, he trusted that if the Government took into consideration the extension of the boundaries of some of the Northern towns with a view to their enfranchisement, they would also consider the claims of Limerick and other Southern towns, and not enfranchise towns in the North at the expense of Southern constituencies. He did not think there was any reason for grouping such towns as Bandon, Kinsale, and Mallow. The two first were in the same district, with a joint population of 12,000 or 13,000, and there were several large villages near. There could be no doubt, therefore, that at an election the number of people who would vote in these places would have great influence in deciding who should sit for that division of the county of Cork. The same argument would apply to every other such constituency in Ireland. He trusted that Her Majesty's Government would not alter their Bill in this respect.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*.

As the Tellers came up to the Table to announce the numbers The O'GORMAN MAHON, interrupting them, addressed some words to Lord RICHARD GROSVENOR, one of the Government Tellers, on the floor of the House, and immediately afterwards proceeded to his place.

Lord RICHARD GROSVENOR reported the numbers:—Ayes 93; Noes 183: Majority 90.—(Div. List, No. 50.)

THE CHAIRMAN called upon Mr. Dalrymple to proceed with the next Amendment.

MR. SEXTON: I rise to a point of Order. I understand my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Clare (The O'Gorman Mahon) did not hear the Question put in the last division, and therefore had remained in the right Lobby without voting. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether, that being so, the hon. and gallant Member is not entitled to have the Question put to him from the Chair, and, if necessary, to have his vote recorded?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and gallant Member would have been entitled so to do if he had made his complaint at the proper moment; but he allowed the opportunity to pass.

MR. KENNY: The hon. and gallant Gentleman, I understand, endeavoured, under misapprehension, to rectify his mistake by informing the Clerk at the Table of what had occurred before the

result of the division was declared; and I wish to know, Sir, inasmuch as he likewise appealed to the senior Government Whip, whether he is not entitled to have his vote properly recorded?

THE CHAIRMAN: It would have been open to the hon. and gallant Gentleman to have made his mistake known to the Tellers, and then it would have been corrected.

MR. SEXTON: He did appeal to the Whip.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am informed that the hon. and gallant Member communicated with the Clerk beside me, who informed the hon. and gallant Member that the course to pursue was to convey the information to the Tellers.

MR. SEXTON: He did so.

THE CHAIRMAN: But the hon. and gallant Member did not do so before the numbers were announced.

MR. SEXTON: Before the numbers were announced I saw the hon. and gallant Member make a statement to the noble Lord Lord Richard Grosvenor; and I appeal to the noble Lord to state what the communication was which the hon. and gallant Member made to him?

LORD RICHARD GROSVENOR: The hon. and gallant Gentleman spoke to me just before I read out the numbers.

MR. SEXTON: In these circumstances, Sir, I appeal to you to amend the record.

THE CHAIRMAN: I understand that the hon. and gallant Gentleman did communicate with the Tellers before the numbers were announced, and in that case I think the correction may be made.

THE O'GORMAN MAHON: I wish, Sir, to register my vote with the "Noes."

THE CHAIRMAN: Did the hon. and gallant Member hear the Question put?

THE O'GORMAN MAHON: No, Sir; I did not hear any Question put.

THE CHAIRMAN stated the Question to the hon. and gallant Member, and asked: Does the hon. and gallant Gentleman wish to record his vote with the "Ayes" or the "Noes"?

THE O'GORMAN MAHON: With the "Noes," Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: Then the numbers must be corrected accordingly. The Ayes to the right were 93, and the Noes to the left 184.

The following is the entry in the Votes:—

"The O'Gorman Mahon, Member for Clare, came to the Table and informed the Chairman that, not having heard the Question put, he had remained in the right Lobby without voting, and that he had informed one of the Tellers for the Ayes of the circumstance before the Numbers were declared:—

"Whereupon the Chairman stated the Question to the honourable Member, and he declared himself with the Noes, and the Chairman directed that his name should be added to the Noes:—Ayes 93, Noes 184."

MR. DALRYMPLE said, he wished to move an Amendment to the clause, to except from its operation—

"Such burghs in Scotland, forming part of existing groups of burghs, as shall be grouped with other burgh districts, or such burghs as shall be grouped with other towns not at present represented, for the purpose of forming burgh districts in Scotland."

He made no apology for troubling the Committee with his Amendment. He considered that the subject was of great importance to Scotland, and that a question ought not only to be asked, but that they ought also to have a definite answer from the Government with regard to it. The Amendment was not inconsistent with what was proposed by the Lord Advocate on the part of the Government, but had a different object in view. Whatever fate it might meet with on the present occasion—whether it was ultimately withdrawn or negatived—he was quite aware it was in his power to raise the question again on the details of the Schedules; but, at the same time, he thought it would be a great convenience to the Committee that the question generally should be raised at this stage. He wanted to make clear the principle on which Amendments to the Schedules would be subsequently moved. The Amendment was in two parts, which were quite distinct; but they both had reference to the desirableness of continuing and developing the grouping system in Scotland. He wished, with regard to the first part of the Amendment, so to speak, to check the process of liberation in one case, because he proposed to deal with one burgh about to be liberated by having it transferred to another group; and as to the second part of the Amendment he wished to leave the door wide open for adding

to groups now existing other towns in the same counties. He wished to say a word as to the expression "liberation," with which they had become familiar. That expression always reminded him of the now famous expression about the evacuation by Egypt of the Soudan and its restoration to freedom. There was a notion of satisfaction — almost of exhilaration—about this "liberation;" but he maintained that, as in the one case so in the other, it was a contradiction in terms. Just as in the case of the Soudan it meant liberation to chaos and terror, so in the case of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill it meant liberation to electoral discomfiture, liberation to aggravated anomalies, liberation to smothering and suffocation of country interests in counties under the great numerical superiority of the towns. He desired the fair consideration of the Committee, and especially of hon. Members from Scotland sitting opposite, to the case he was about to bring before them. He wished them to put him out of consideration altogether, and to consider the case itself. He should be content if they would dissociate all idea of any Tory taint in the Amendment as he moved it, and only consider the circumstances of the case. He did not mean to refer in the slightest degree to the political character of his object. He was very doubtful whether, supposing the Amendment were carried, the political effect would be great; but he thought an anomaly of the most aggravated description would be remedied, under which, as he maintained, the country part of counties would, in time to come, be practically unrepresented. What he proposed was consistent, and what the Government proposed was inconsistent, with the instructions given to the Boundary Commissioners, which were to the effect that in forming the divisions the population of several districts should be equalized as far as practicable, and that care should be taken, in all cases where there were populous localities of an urban character, to group them all in the same division, unless it were found that it could not be done without great inconvenience. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of Her Majesty's Government, in introducing the Bill to the House, or rather when he moved the second reading, distinctly pointed to an endeavour on the part of the Government, when they dealt with the details of the question, to separate, as far as might be practicable, the urban and the rural elements. He was not an advocate of anything in the nature of equal electoral districts; nothing was more remote from his mind; but he concluded that when an extended franchise was given to the counties it was intended that the country parts of counties should have some weight in the electoral scale. Could it be said that in the Bill as it stood, or if the Amendment of the Lord Advocate should be adopted, there was any fair attempt to separate the urban and rural elements? He said that so far as the Bill stood, and the proposals of the Lord Advocate went, there was not a shadow of an attempt to fulfil those conditions which were shadowed out by the Prime Minister, and which were in the instructions to the Boundary Commissioners. A man said to him not very long ago, when speaking of this subject—"But are they not all men?" "Yes;" he replied, "they are all men, and they will all be voters; and if the whole notion that is in your head is what Mr. Carlyle called 'head counting by thousands,' I quite understand that you attach very little importance to redistribution; but if there is any idea of redistribution, if there is any sense of a fair proportion of representation between town and country, then, I say, there ought to be some addition to existing groups of boroughs, to relieve to some extent the great inequality that will prevail between town and country." He remembered that the present Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), who was the pioneer in all these matters—although other men now interested themselves in them, and little was now said of the right hon. Gentleman's share in the movement—used to say, speaking in a somewhat rhetorical fashion, that it was shocking to think that if Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, were alive now, he would not have a vote. Well, he would not have had a vote now if it had not been for the service franchise; and, what was more, Hogg, if he did have the benefit of the service franchise, would, under the Bill as it now stood, have not the smallest conceivable say in the political condition of the country; because in various regions of the country it was perfectly obvious that, as the Bill stood, the urban

element would outweigh out of all sight the country element. It was worth mentioning how vast was the disproportion between the county and burgh representation of Scotland. The burghs returned one Member for every 59,000 odd of the population, and the counties one Member for 53,000 odd. These numbers, he believed, were not disputed. The Chancellor of the Duchy, speaking on the last Amendment, said that they would give much larger political influence in time to come to the towns that were to be liberated; and he had pointed out that the towns would be the places where the newspapers would be published, where the markets would be held, and so forth. Well, that was perfectly true; it was what he not only admitted, but asserted; and it was because the liberated towns would have a so much larger influence in time to come in the counties to which they belonged that he said that in some cases the disproportion between town and county ought to be more adjusted, and that in other cases existing groups of burghs ought to be increased by the addition of towns of considerable proportions in the same counties. They used to hear a good deal about anomalies in former times; and he was under the impression that one of the objects of this Bill was to prevent anomalies; but, as it stood, the Bill aggravated them to a great extent. They might not be the same anomalies; but, at all events, there would be created new ones of a very startling character. He would illustrate by a single instance what he meant. He took one county particularly as an illustration, because he was not connected with it in the remotest degree. He took the county of Stirling. It was proposed by an Amendment on the Paper to group together the burghs of Stirling and Falkirk, with a population of 27,000, and it was intended in the Bill that the county population to be represented by one Member should be 54,000 or 54,000; so that these interesting burghs of Stirling and Falkirk would enjoy in the time to come fully a third more representation than the county, and not only so, but in that county there was a great variety of populous places—he need not define "populous places," for there was no doubt as to what was meant—and the country parts of the county would, for good or for evil, be overruled and overridden by the urban element in the county. So that there was not only the extraordinary anomaly of the burghs being represented by one Member on the one hand, and the county, with its very large population, being also represented by one Member, but that the country population would be large, out of all right, when compared with the burgh population represented. He could give other instances, but would not trouble the Committee with them now. He hoped that on the Schedules it might hereafter be possible to mention other cases of equal importance. If the President of the Local Government Board dealt fully, as he hoped he would, with this Amendment in reply, he must not only say that the Government never contemplated regrouping; that they never contemplated the enfranchisement of these new towns in connection with existing groups—it would not do to say that alone, because the Government must have fully foreseen the effect of the greatly extended franchise in the counties; and, as he had already said, by the Bill as it was introduced, and by the instructions to the Boundary Commissioners, it was distinctly contemplated that the urban and rural elements should be, as far as possible, kept apart. The right hon. Gentleman should, he thought, also justify the departure from that principle which was laid down so prominently in both these quarters. The right hon. Baronet must account for the abandonment of the proposal to have a fair division between the urban and rural elements such as he Mr. Dalrymple desired to see. As he had said, he had no intention of going in for the creation of electoral districts, but he was of opinion, in the spirit of the declaration of the Prime Minister, and of the directions to the Boundary Commissioners, that an attempt should be made to rectify the extraordinary electoral anomalies that the Bill would create between the burgh and the county constituencies. It was for that purpose that he had brought forward his Amendment; and he should listen with interest to what the right hon. Baronet would say in reply.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 13, after the word "Act," to insert the words "except such burghs in Scotland forming part of a group of burghs, as shall be grouped with other burgh districts, or such burghs as shall be grouped with other

towns not at present represented, for the purpose of forming burgh districts in Scotland."—(*Mr. Dalrymple.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he thought the hon. Member had made a very good defence of a case for which there was a good deal to be said. It was a case which, if they were to negative his Amendment on that occasion, they should not be able to avoid a discussion upon on a future occasion, because this was a matter which could be raised, undoubtedly, whether or not the words proposed by the hon. Member were here introduced. It was not a case that could be decided by the rejection or the acceptance of the Amendment on the present occasion, because there were two ways of doing what the hon. Member proposed. By the scheme of the Bill itself, if the Scottish groups were to be treated in the way the Lord Advocate had proposed to treat some of them, or treated as the groups in Welsh counties were treated, even if those words were negatived, it would be competent to the Committee on the Schedule to abolish certain existing Scottish groups, to re-group them, and to extend them by adding others to them. The matter, therefore, would not be finally concluded on that occasion; and he was afraid the result of the moving of the Amendment now would be that they would have two debates on the question. But, perhaps, that would be an advantage, because he thought it was deserving of very careful attention and consideration from the Committee. No one, he thought, was disposed to say that the present constitution of groups in Scotland was altogether satisfactory. He never heard of any Member of the House who took that view. Therefore, the door was open, by that general admission, to proposals that might be brought forward by the hon. Member. This was a matter as to which he should be glad to hear the opinion of Scotch Members when they came to the Schedules, and he had no doubt opinions would be very freely expressed. He had already had some means of forming an impression of the general opinion of Scotch Members; and certain proposals had been made by the Lord Advocate, which would come on in the Schedules, in which his right hon. and learned Friend had tried to act on the opinions which appeared to be those of the majority, but with some doubt as to what was the exact opinion on details, which they could only discover satisfactorily when they came to discuss the Schedules. The hon. Member (Mr. Dalrymple) had told them that the urban element would outweigh the rural element in Scotland. The hon. Member had spoken in a very guarded way; but there could be no doubt that here and there there were counties in Scotland where the urban element would outweigh the rural element; but so there were in England; and he altogether took issue with the hon. Member if he made that statement a general statement. He did not think that such general statement could be seriously maintained by those who knew Scotland as well as the hon. Member did. The hon. Member said the Prime Minister, when he first gave a general sketch of the provisions of the Bill, attached great importance to the separation of the rural and urban elements. His right hon. Friend did so, and it had been the desire of the Government, as was shown in the instructions to the Boundary Commissioners, with regard to the formation of districts in counties, to act upon that principle, and, as far as possible, to separate these elements. It was undoubtedly the case, as he knew from the great number of remonstrances that had reached him from those who sat on his own side of the House, and representing those who were not in the House, that a great deal of dissatisfaction had been given to Members of the Liberal Party by a too strict adherence to those instructions. He knew that in one division of Lanarkshire, and in the case of the division of the county of Perth, great dissatisfaction had been expressed because the Commissioners had acted strictly on their instructions. It was his intention, however, on the part of the Government, to give the firmest support to these decisions. Although the hon. Member was quite within his rights in raising a discussion on this occasion, he could only point out that the insertion of his Amendment was not necessary from his own point of view. If the Committee negatived those words, they would be able, when the question cropped up on the Schedule, to extend the present grouping by add-

ing outside burghs, if they thought fit, and they would also be able to break up and reconstitute groups anywhere, if it seemed desirable to the Committee. Looking, therefore, to the difficulty of discussing this as an abstract question, and the desirability of discussing it with facts before them, he thought it would be more desirable if they discussed it on the Schedules of the Bill.

MR CARR LYWINS said, that after the observations of the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill, Sir Charles Wood, it might appear unnecessary to continue the debate. The proposal of the Lord Advocate, concurred in by the Scotch Members at their meeting upstairs, was that no burgh or populous place should be added to any group of burghs, however unjust the redistribution of those burghs might be. That was a proposal he Mr Carr Lywins condemned. It was true that the instructions given to the Boundary Commissioners in Scotland, England, and Ireland were, unfortunately, identical, but the circumstances of each country were different. In his opinion, the only way in which they could fairly separate the urban and rural populations was either by proportional representation or by grouping burghs, and he was very much surprised that the Leaders of the Conservative Party in making arrangements with the Government did not stipulate that any burghs which were being disfranchised and added to the counties should be grouped together, thus separating the urban from the rural population. But as this arrangement had been agreed to by the Leaders of both Parties, so far as England and Ireland was concerned he would not now reopen the question. He would, however, point out to the Committee the peculiarities of Scotland, and that the same instructions were not suitable to Scotland as to England and Ireland. Wherever they had a system of grouping of burghs, as in Scotland, where they had 15 or nearly a quarter of the total number of Members—they must either continue the system, or destroy grouping altogether. In order to show how inadequate was the proposition of the Government he would give an illustration from the case of the county of Stirling. That county had a population of 112,000, and it had now one county Member and a portion of a burgh Member in respect of the burgh of Stirling. The remaining burghs belonging to this group, called the Stirling Burghs, were out of the county altogether—namely, in Fifeshire and Linlithgowshire. The Lord Advocate, no doubt, recognized that anomaly, and proposed now to make one group in the county of Stirling, and leaving the county Member; but he gave to this group of burghs a population of only 50,000, whilst that of the county was 112,000; and this notwithstanding that there were in one part of the county of Stirling numerous boroughs and populous places—manufacturing towns—that could be added. He would call attention now to the extraordinary proposal of the Government as to Fifeshire and Ayrshire. The county of Fife had two burgh Members and one county Member, and the Government proposed to continue the burgh Members and give another Member to the county. The population of the burghs was 40,000 for Kirkcaldy, and 19,425 for St Andrew's, and that of the whole county 170,000. By dividing the latter by four, it would be seen that there would be about 40,000 to each constituency. Ayrshire had a population of 220,000, and had hitherto nearly four Members—at all events 3½ or 3½. The Government proposed to take away one Member; and he asked whether that was just or fair, especially considering the way in which Fifeshire was treated? For his own part, he considered it a manifestly unjust arrangement, and he trusted the Lord Advocate would reconsider the matter, and come to the conclusion that, by an amalgamation of the St Andrew's and Kirkcaldy Burghs, the county of Fife might be satisfied with one Member. Then he wished to call attention to the county which he represented. The county of Dumbarton was one of the most prosperous and rapidly increasing counties in the whole of Scotland. It had increased 28 per cent in the last decade, and was increasing to a greater extent at present. Looking to the enormous works that were being constructed all down the Clyde, he had no hesitation in saying that the population of the county would soon be over 100,000. It was said that they might look for some further drastic alterations in regard to the representation of the people when the new Parliament was brought together, but he thought, at

all events, they ought to look forward to a settlement of this question which would last for a long period, and that, therefore, they should be guided by principles of fair play rather than by Party politics. Instead of forming a Dumbarton group of burghs, the Lord Advocate proposed only to take the burgh of Dumbarton, with a population of 13,782, and group it with Renfrew, leaving the county of Dumbarton with a population of 73,000, although it contained several burghs and populous places which might minimize the influence of the rural voters. He thought they ought rather to make a Dumbarton group of burghs; and he hoped, at any rate, that the Lord Advocate would meet this matter in a fair spirit.

Mr. C. S. PARKER said, that, in common with the hon. Member who had just sat down, he had listened with great interest to the remarks made by the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill upon the Amendment of the hon. Member for Bute (Mr. Dalrymple); and he entirely agreed with him when he said that, although the action of his hon. Friend in putting this Notice of Amendment on the Paper might cause them to have two debates on the subject, that might not be a loss, but a gain, because the Amendment raised the question of principle before proceeding to handle matters of detail. He thought that most of the Scotch Members were under the impression that, although the Government had made no formal declaration on the question of the grouping of burghs, yet, practically, they had determined that the Committee should not open it, except in regard to Parliamentary burghs already existing. But now they had a definite answer from the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill; not that the Government were prepared to agree to further grouping, but that they were prepared to admit the free discussion of that, among other proposals, for the re-arrangement of burghs. He thought Scotland had not in this Bill been considered with as much care as the more important and larger part of the United Kingdom. He thought that principles had been laid down chiefly with reference to England, and that these principles had been too hastily applied to Scotland. No attempt had been made in the Bill to mitigate the anomalies presented by the old Scottish system of grouped burghs. Throughout Scotland, he believed, the impression had gone abroad that, in making any proposals for the amendment of the present inconvenient arrangement, it was necessary to confine themselves to such arrangements as would not include any burgh that was not already a Parliamentary burgh. But he now understood, from what had fallen from the right hon. Baronet, that they were not so precluded. If that were so, he would suggest that, having now received an answer on the question of principle, they might postpone further debate until they reached the Schedules of the Bill. It would be to the benefit of Scotland that they should allow the country to consider the question. In his own county of Ayr they should be allowed to reconsider their position as to the grouping proposed in the Bill in the light of the new declaration from the Treasury Bench. Under the circumstances, he hoped the discussion on the question of principle would not be greatly prolonged.

Mr. COCHRAN-PATRICK said, he did not think that his hon. Friend the Member for Dumbartonshire (Mr. Orr Ewing) had quite followed the development of the question; because he had not alluded to the fact that the Lord Advocate, who proposed that the representation of Ayrshire should be curtailed, had very recently put on the Paper certain proposals which practically gave back to the county of Ayrshire the representation which it now had. He was inclined to be satisfied with that Amendment; but he wished to take the opportunity of saying that he had heard the remarks of the right hon. Baronet, and looked upon his statement with great satisfaction. He agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Perth (Mr. Parker) that the country should have an opportunity of considering the matter; and as they would have a certain opportunity of raising a great number of these points of detail when the Schedules were reached, he ventured to suggest that his hon. Friend should withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. BUCHANAN said, he was obliged to confess that he did not wholly agree with the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Perth (Mr. Parker). He had heard with surprise the statement of the right hon. Baronet

in charge of the Bill, because it appeared to him to be absolutely contradictory, not only of what had been said by Members of the Government on former occasions, but of what he himself had stated at an earlier period of the Sitting. He understood the right hon. Baronet to say, when discussing the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dumfriesshire (Mr. Maitland), that the Government thought the extension of grouping was generally undesirable, and that they should be more desirous of lessening than extending its principle. The results in Wales and Scotland, the right hon. Baronet went on to say, had not been so good as to make it desirable to extend the system in England and Ireland, and the Government had made up their minds to resist the extension of the system. What the right hon. Baronet said now appeared to him (Mr. Buchanan) somewhat different. The door was open, he said, to proposals for extension of the system of grouping, that might be brought forward by the hon. Member for Bute. Each hon. Member for Perth was therefore perfectly justified in welcoming the present statement of the right hon. Baronet, because it gave him and the other Friends of the grouping system an opportunity of extending, or at least an invitation to extend the system in Scotland, by adding burghs having no Parliamentary representation to the existing groups.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said that he had stated that if they negatived the Amendment it would be quite open to them to raise the question again on the Schedule of the Bill.

MR. BUCHANAN: It is in our power to do so. The Amendment we like when the Schedule is reached, but we want to know whether Amendments for the extension of grouping are, in the opinion of the Government, admissible Amendments or not.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have already discussing the question on its merits; as anything we can do we would not prevent its being raised on the Schedule.

MR. BUCHANAN: I do not wish to enter into any argument. But I think the right hon. Baronet did discuss the question on its merits earlier in the day.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The earlier Amendment shut out all further discussion on the question of Irish boroughs; but that is not the case with the Amendment before the Committee.

MR. BUCHANAN said, he was glad to have obtained some further explanation from the right hon. Baronet. It was evident that hon. Members had found considerable ambiguity in his remarks on the question of grouping boroughs. His hon. Friend the Member for Perth (Mr. Parker) had said he hoped the statement of the right hon. Baronet would go down to Scotland and be duly considered, and the hon. Member for North Ayrshire (Mr. Cochran-Patrick), viewing the statement with satisfaction, said that a number of Amendments would be proposed on the Schedule in order to carry it out. He (Mr. Buchanan) should deprecate entirely any such step as the extension of the system of grouping in Scotland. He had always maintained that it was fallacious to treat a group of burghs as if it were a single burgh. The population standard should have been applied to the contributory burghs individually, not to the group collectively, and the same standard should have been applied, and in the same way, to all parts of the United Kingdom. That was the only logical method of dealing with the problem, and he regretted that it had not been adopted by the Government.

SIR JOHN HAY said, that one would have supposed that a Bill which gave an additional number of Members to Scotland would have provided some additional representation for the more populous parts of Scotland. But in the case of the county of Ayr, although 12 Members had been added for Scotland, this county, now represented by three Members, was in future to have only two. Again, with regard to the county of Stirling, he found that out of the 112,000 persons contained in the whole county, 70,000 lived in towns and 30,000 in the rural districts, and yet, by the proposal now before the Committee, there would be two Members given to the latter, and only to the former. That surely could not be a fair arrangement; and as there were many towns in Scotland to which the same principle was applied in the Bill, he was glad that Her Majesty's Government were prepared to consider this matter, and he hoped that before the Bill left the House some arrangement would be made by which the burghs and towns of

Scotland which had burghal government, and which were united under Act of Parliament as places self-governing, should be represented as hitherto.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): My right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) rather deprecated a discussion of the general question just now, inasmuch as, he said, the whole matter would be opened on the Schedules. But I think if any hon. Member interpreted what he said as implying any intention on the part of the Government to propose the addition of new towns to the existing groups of burghs, my right hon. Friend's meaning was misapprehended. There was no such intention conveyed. Had it been the view of Her Majesty's Government that it would be a fit and proper thing either to increase the number of groups or the number of units of existing groups, they would have placed upon the Paper Amendments to carry out that object. But there are no such Amendments on the Paper. My right hon. Friend indicated that the matter would be fully open for discussion when the Schedules are reached, and that if before that time there did appear to be a widely prevalent feeling on the part of the Scotch Members that such additions should be made, then that matter would be duly considered by the Government. I do not, however, think there is the least likelihood of a proposal of the kind emanating from Her Majesty's Government. My hon. Friend the Member for Dumbarton (Mr. Orr Ewing) asks whether the views I expressed on this question have been changed. I can inform my hon. Friend that my opinions have not changed. The general principle throughout the Three Kingdoms has been to distinguish between burgh and shire. It is an exceptional thing to have, as in Scotland, groups of burghs arising historically from somewhat exceptional causes, and the causes which led to these groups being formed are much less in operation now than in former days, because in the old times there was a sharper distinction between the old Royal burghs and the surrounding counties than now exists between town and county. From time to time these burghs have been increased by the addition of places that were not Royal burghs, but which were elevated to the rank of Parliamentary burghs. But when the whole country is receiving an identical franchise, many of the reasons which led to these distinctions ceased to exist; and when we have the number of populous places largely increasing in this country, and are prepared to extend this system almost indefinitely, I say it would be impossible to increase the number in the manner indicated by my hon. Friend. It has been suggested that the only distinction should be between what have been termed agricultural and urban populations. But I must point out that agriculture, although a very great and primary industry, is by no means the sole industry pursued in the counties. There are practically industries in villages and towns of all grades; and unless you are to cut out of the counties all those places which really give many of them their character, you cannot perform the kind of operation which would leave agriculture cut off alone from all other kinds of industry. If you find a county in which there are numerous places historically important, as Royal burghs, the proper course would be to take the county as you find it. So that, without pursuing the discussion of this question, I think it right to say that while it is both technically and substantially open to consideration on the Schedules, the view I formerly expressed on this matter is not changed. I rather think that my hon. Friend the Member for Dumbartonshire, in comparing Ayrshire with Fifeshire, had not adverted to the fact that a change has been made as far as Ayrshire is concerned.

MR. ORR EWING: But not as regards Fifeshire.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): There was an intelligible reason in regard to Ayrshire, inasmuch as the original proposal involved the union of Argyllshire with the Island of Bute. But that proposal did not meet with approval to the requisite extent; and therefore what I may call a proposal to reinstate Kilmarnock in Ayrshire was made, with the result that, as far as Ayrshire is concerned, it will remain exactly as it was before. Now, my hon. Friend made some remarks, not strictly germane to the question, in regard to the manner in which particular counties had been treated. My hon. Friend complained that Ayrshire had not the re-

quisite number of Members as compared with other counties. Now, I must point out to hon. that, as far as regards the Renfrewshire part of Ayrshire, it has a population of something over 161,000, and for that it has two Members, while Fifeshire, with a population of 161,000, has only one Member. In the allocation of the new Members what has been done is strictly to follow the state of population, taking the largest first, and then coming downwards. If my hon. Friend had studied the statistics he would have seen that regard has been had to the subject of population. However, I will not pursue the argument on this matter now, because when the Schedules come to be considered any proposals made by the hon. Member will receive ample consideration. But the Government do not see that there is any necessity, either in the nature of the thing or in any prevalent or general desire in Scotland for the extension of this system, that would seem to prove for them to propose such an extension.

Mr. ROLLESTON said, that the hon. Member seemed to appeared to speak of Stirlingshire as if it was a kind of knowledge. He (Mr. Rolleston) had to have more knowledge of Stirlingshire than either of those hon. Gentlemen, and he said, without fear of contradiction, that the constituency or the electors in Stirlingshire were perfectly satisfied with the proposal of the Government which was to leave Stirlingshire as it stood in the Bill. The hon. Member for Dumbartonshire (Mr. Orr Ewing) took a paternal interest in the affairs of Stirlingshire. Mr. ORR EWING: I live there. He was aware of that and it was very natural that he should take that paternal interest. But the hon. Member would eliminate from Stirlingshire all the small populous places. Mr. ORR EWING: I did not say that. If he had [illegible] that day he had on many occasions previously and publicly. But he would [illegible] that, for, by a re-arrangement of Stirlingshire, he proposed to relieve his own constituency of Dumbartonshire. Mr. ORR EWING: I have not proposed that. Now he thought it was very desirable that the real object of hon. Gentlemen opposite in proposing a re-arrangement or re-grouping of the burghs should be well and thoroughly known. That object was nothing else than jerrymandering; and the hon. Member for Dumbartonshire proposed, not on that occasion, but publicly and in the Committee Room of the House, to take from Stirlingshire, as a share, all the small populous places in it, and re-group them with a few larger burghs. But, finding that the arrangement would not be entirely satisfactory, he also proposed to add to that group a populous place of his own district. And not that only, for it would not be sufficient to make the hon. Member secure; and accordingly he proposed to take out of Dumbartonshire many of the populous villages of that county, and add them to a new group of burghs. His hon. Friend had told the Committee that Dumbartonshire was one of the most rapidly-increasing counties in Scotland, so far as population was concerned, and in that statement his hon. Friend was not far from the truth. But the Dumbartonshire which he would leave was not that part of the county which was rapidly increasing in population. The part which was increasing in population was that composed of small villages, which the hon. Member would take out of the county altogether and group with the burghs. He had risen chiefly to say that the electors of Stirlingshire were perfectly satisfied with the present arrangement, and that nothing could be more unpopular, not only in Stirlingshire, but throughout Scotland, than the adoption of the principle which the hon. Member for Bute (Mr. Dalrymple) had proposed. He believed that if the Scotch Members were polled, they would, with one or two exceptions, vote against the proposal of the hon. Gentleman. He would also like to say that the announcement made that day by the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke) that the door was still open for re-consideration of the question whether places or burghs, not now grouped in Scotland, should be added to existing groups would cause considerable consternation, and he could not but regret that a statement so distinct in its tone had not been more distinctly withdrawn. For the explanation, it appeared to him, left the question in such a light that it would very much unsettle matters in Scotland with respect to this Bill.

Mr. PRESTON BRUCE said, with reference to what had been said about the over-representation of Fifeshire, he would content himself by saying that the constituencies in that county had

been treated on the same principles as had been applied to all the other constituencies in the country. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) should have used words capable of being construed into an invitation for proposals to create new Parliamentary burghs. Not only was that totally inconsistent with what were understood to be the views of the Government, but they had it on record that the Lord Advocate himself considered any proposals of the kind inadmissible. A letter, read, he had no doubt, by all Scotch Members, had been published in the newspapers addressed to some Association in Dumbartonshire, and written by the Secretary to the Lord Advocate and by his directions, stating that, in the Lord Advocate's belief, the creation of new burghs, either to form new groups or to be added to existing groups, was outside the scope of the measure. Therefore, this subject of grouping had been discussed in Scotland on that basis, and the assumption had been that new burghs would not be created; that declaration of the Lord Advocate being taken as conclusive, so far as this matter was concerned. He felt certain that the Government could not intend to throw over their own official, the Lord Advocate, and to raise a question of this kind, when it was far too late to consider properly what new Parliamentary burghs should be created, and the forming of which would entirely upset the present arrangement.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said, that, after the discussion which had taken place, he was willing to withdraw his Amendment. He was not aware that at that time of day anyone proposed to produce fresh schemes of grouping in Scotland. He spoke for himself only when he said he was satisfied at the time with the answer obtained from the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who had charge of the Bill, and he still remained satisfied, although they had had a somewhat different version of that answer from the Lord Advocate. He thought there was some satisfaction in hearing that the subject was still open for discussion on the Schedules; and he could only say it was not his intention to introduce large schemes of re-grouping, such as had been anticipated by hon. Gentlemen opposite. He repeated his satisfaction with the declaration made by the Government, and would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Mr. WARTON said, he gave the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) credit for perfect accuracy based upon the fullest knowledge in this matter; but he would ask him whether he was satisfied that the list in the second part of the first Schedule comprised all the counties of cities and towns in England?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I am satisfied that it is so.

Clause *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer would state what would be the Business taken to-morrow?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): We take to-morrow, first, the remainder of the Supplementary Civil Service Estimates, and then the Vote on Account. If there should be any time afterwards, we shall go on with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer if there was any truth in a telegram which had just been received in regard to a further advance of Russian troops in Afghanistan?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I have no information since 3 o'clock to-day.

MOTIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (BOLTON, &c.) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. George Russell, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local

Government Board relating to the Boroughs of Bolton and Hornton, the Improvement Act Districts of Mansfield and Milford, and the Borough of Stockton, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr GEORGE RUSSELL and Sir CHARLES DILKE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 91.]

MUNICIPAL RATES BILL.

On Motion of Mr JOSEPH COWEN, Bill to make better provision for the making, assessment, and collection of Municipal Rates, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr JOSEPH COWEN, Mr ARMITAGE, Mr JOHN MORLEY, and Mr DODDS.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 92.]

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 12th March, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Tramways (Ireland) Provisional Order No. 1 * (34); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Labourers Act) (No. 1) * (35).

Third Reading—Marriages Legalization, see Marriages Validity * (30), and *passed*.

INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX (IRELAND)—QUESTION.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE asked Her Majesty's Government, Why in Ireland, in calculating liability for income tax payable under Schedule B., it is, in lands let to tenants, calculated on rent actually paid, while on lands farmed by the owner it is calculated on ordnance value, when the owner can show from previous lettings that the letting value of such lands is considerably higher than the ordnance value?

LORD SUDELEY, in reply, said, that the Income Tax under both Schedule A and Schedule B in Ireland was calculated upon the Poor Law valuation, known also as Griffith's, and called by the noble Lord "ordnance." The landowner was supposed to receive as rent the amount of the valuation, and he was taxed on that. The occupier was supposed to make as profit, in addition to the rent, one-third of that amount, and he was taxed on that—*i.e.*, nominally on the whole valuation at one-third of the general rate of the tax. These amounts were *maxima*, which could not be increased, and which were only reduced by way of remission in special cases. When land was in hand the landlord paid under both Schedules (A and B) on figures calculated as thus explained. If, at the end of the year, he considered that his profit as occupier was less than the amount so calculated, he could appeal; and if he could put in figures to prove his case, the overcharge, under Schedule B, was repaid to him. In such figures on appeal—and this was the point to which the noble Lord was supposed to refer—the rent theoretically payable by him as occupier to himself as owner was put at the amount of the Poor Law valuation. This was obviously just, because that was the amount on which he was taxed as owner under Schedule A. If a larger allowance were made on the one side he ought, in equity, to pay the tax for a larger receipt on the other. Where the owner did not farm his own land, and the occupier applied for a remission, the actual rent paid was a fact which appeared in the accounts, and if it was larger than the valuation it was possible he might get a remission where the owner would not, if the land were in hand. But this was no hardship to the latter; in fact, it was the contrary, because he got a higher rent than the amount on which he was taxed. In short, the owner who had land in hand paid no more than was just and lawful, while on let land the occupier paid as much as could be properly claimed from him. Rents in all parts of Ireland except Ulster being even now sensibly, often considerably, in excess of the Poor Law valuation, landlords there habitually paid Income Tax on less than they received, and provision was made that in no case should they pay it on more than they received.

INDIA—THE BENGAL TENANCY BILL.

OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS, who had given Notice of his intention to put the following Question to the Secretary for India:—

Whether he will use his influence to cause the Bengal Tenancy Bill to be published and circulated, as amended by the Committee of the Council in India, before it is passed into law, so as to enable those interested in the measure, whether zemindars, middlemen, or ryots, to

have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with its provisions?"

said, that he found that he stood somewhat in the position of the man who locked his stable door after his steed was stolen, because he had read in *The Times* of that morning a telegram to the effect that the Bill had been passed with little alteration, and that, though 250 zemindars and other proprietors of land protested against the measure, and the Viceroy received a deputation, he refused to delay the passing of the Bill. Thereupon the zemindars held a meeting and contributed a large sum of money to continue the agitation against the Bill. That showed a reason for bringing on the question two days ago. It appeared that the Under Secretary for India said in "another place" on Tuesday that there had been no haste; but the announcement to-day came upon those interested in the matter by surprise, and he trusted, therefore, that their Lordships would permit him to say a few words with regard to this measure, so as to explain the nature of the Question he was about to put to Her Majesty's Government in reference to it. In his view this Bengal Tenancy Bill was intended practically to extend to India the principles of the Irish Land Act. That was a fact. The history of this Bill was a somewhat curious one. A Bill on the subject was introduced in 1877 to enable the zemindars to collect their rents, such as was introduced into Parliament to enable Irish landlords, as it was stated *ad nauseam*, to collect their rents. But in 1883 another Bill appeared of a totally different character—a purely Irish Bill, having in it the principle of the three F's—namely, fixity of tenure, free sale, fair rent, as well as compensation for disturbance, and other points of similarity to the Irish Land Bill. In 1883-4 this Bill was referred to a Select Committee, and after various procedure, the Select Committee, composed of 11 Members, agreed to their Report by only three of a majority. The Report recommended various changes, and the Bill was not published or printed with these changes made in it till the 13th February. The object of himself and all those for whom he spoke was that some time should have been given—for it was now a matter that was past—for the consideration of the amended Bill, in which great and marked changes had been made. Instead of time being given the Bill had been rushed through. More time to consider it and the republication of the Bill in the vernacular were all that was asked for. But the Viceroy had to meet—and he was glad of it—the Ameer of Afghanistan on the 27th, and it was held that this Bill had to pass before the departure of the Viceroy. He could not but think that this matter had been followed up and pressed with undue—that was, unwise—haste. But the Bill would not become law until it received the sanction of the Secretary of State; and what he asked was, that the noble Lord would not give his assent to this Bill until there was a full opportunity of ascertaining what was the opinion of the public with regard to it both in India and in England.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH also complained that sufficient time had not been given for the consideration of the measure in its altered state. It should be remembered that the means of circulating information in India were not so good as in England. It seemed as if the Bill had been hurried through in order that the Viceroy might hurry off to the North-West Provinces to meet the Ameer of Afghanistan.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that before he went into the details, he thought it would be better for him to read copies of the telegrams which had passed between himself and the Viceroy since the discussion of Tuesday evening in the other House of Parliament. On that evening he telegraphed to the Viceroy as follows:—

"From Secretary of State, 10th March, 1885.

"Statement telegraphed by Durbhunga made in Parliament that you are pressing through Rent Bill without giving time for translation into vernacular; reason given that you must go to Simla. What shall I reply?"

He received the following reply:—

"From the Viceroy, dated and received 11th March, 1885.

"Your telegram 10th. Statement absolutely unfounded. Bill already twice translated into vernacular. Select Committee held 64 meetings. Of these, 28 held in Calcutta within last few months, Maharajah attended only seven. Committee consisted of 11 members, of whom only two go to Simla, and decided vernacular republication unnecessary because almost all alterations were excisions favourable to zemindars and not new clauses. After Bill reported fortnight elapsed before considered by Legislative Council. First motion in Council was for sus-

pension by zemindar representative, which was lost by majority of 18 to 2. Two native members who do not go to Simla had voted before members of Executive Council were called upon to vote. Members representing ryots' interests voted in minority. Bill passed today without division, after seven days' debate."

He thought it was clear, from this, that not only had there not been haste in the passing of the Bill, but that the matter had received an extraordinary amount of deliberation and discussion. In 1877 there was a Bill introduced. That Bill was directed to giving more facilities for the recovery of rents; but it was considered it was impossible to deal with one branch of the subject only. The result was that it was thought desirable by the Viceroy of that time—not his noble Friend the Marquess of Ripon;—that there should be an inquiry into the whole subject of Bengal tenancy. In 1880 the Commission reported, their Report occupying about 500 pages. A Bill was brought forward in 1881. In March, 1882, the Indian Government sent home the Report of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, and the Report of a Commission founded upon it. On August 17, the matter was considered by the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington), and a despatch sent, stating the opinion of the Secretary of State in Council that the necessity for legislation had been established, and going into the matter, as would be seen from the Papers which would shortly be presented to Parliament. After the receipt of his noble Friend's despatch, the Bill was printed by the Legislative Department of the Government of India, and, in conformity with the views of Lord Hartington, a Bill was introduced into the Legislative Council on March 12, 1883, and referred to a Select Committee on the 14th, being then published in English and three vernacular languages. The Bill was then fully examined and criticized. An amended Bill was prepared, which was published in the early part of 1884. The Select Committee having expressed a wish for further information, reports, opinions and criticisms were obtained from a vast number of officials and other persons and published. With all these criticisms before them, he should have thought it might be imagined that the subject was ripe for some decision, some legislation. Upon the consideration of all this evidence, the Bengal Government again referred the matter to a Select Committee. On February 12, 1885, the Select Committee reported, stating that the measure was not so altered as to require to be republished, and recommending that it should be passed as amended.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: How many said that.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that he did not know, as he had not the numbers. The Select Committee consisted of six official and five non-official members, three Natives, and eight Europeans. The Government of India followed their recommendations. The important question was whether it was desirable to delay this legislation any further, and whether the alterations were of such a nature as to render it absolutely necessary there should be such delay. As he was informed, the alterations were not of a very serious or substantial character, and were, at all events, principally in the interests of the zemindars, who now came forward and complained of undue haste. So far as he could judge, the Government of India had acted perfectly right in not postponing this legislation for another Session, as the matter was pressing and had been under consideration a number of years. Information had reached him from India to the effect that the zemindars considered the legislation extremely unfair as regarded them, and that the ryots also looked upon the legislation as unfair towards them. Therefore, he thought, there was a strong presumption that the whole question had been treated in a fair and impartial manner. The noble Earl had spoken of the Bill as an attempt to introduce the three F's into India.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS observed, that he only said that it proceeded on the lines of the Irish legislation of Her Majesty's Government.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, the Bill was prepared by gentlemen versed in Indian affairs, but who had nothing to do with Ireland. The Government had acted in the matter entirely upon Indian principles, and in accordance with Indian precedents. If the Indian legislation had any resemblance to Irish legislation it was merely a coincidence, as it was never intended to apply the same principles in countries so utterly dissimilar. The interference in India by the Courts between the zemindars and

ryots was such that you could not import into it the observances of other countries. He had only to make one further observation in answer to a remark by the noble Earl that the Bill, although passed, was not yet law. He believed that the Bill would not come into operation for a certain time; but whenever it did operate, according to its own clauses, it would require no assent from the Crown, for an Act passed by the Legislative Council of India, and assented to by the Viceroy, took effect from the time of passing. Of course, it was open to the Secretary of State to advise Her Majesty to disallow the Bill. It would not be desirable that he should anticipate the result of a careful examination of the Bill when it came before him officially. At the same time he thought it his duty at once to state that this legislation had in principle the full approbation of Her Majesty's Government, and therefore it was extremely improbable that he should advise Her Majesty to disallow the Bill.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON said, that he might fairly claim that when he was in India he had taken special steps to afford the public the fullest opportunity of considering every measure that came before the Legislative Council. Therefore, it would be unfair towards the present Viceroy if, after the observations of the noble Earl (the Earl of Wemyss), he did not ask the House to allow him to express his entire approval of the course which his noble Friend (Lord Dufferin) had taken in passing the Bengal Tenancy Bill during the present sittings of the Council. The Bill had been before the Council for two whole years, and the question to which it related had been under the consideration of the public for a great deal longer. It had been taken up long before he went to India; one portion of it was considered in 1877, but it was found impossible to deal with that part alone. For that reason the Commission was issued to which reference had been made. When he went out to India that Commission was about to report or had just reported; he did nothing until he received from the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal his opinion upon the subject. Sir A. Eden's recommendations were then fully considered by the Government of India and the Bill of 1883 was brought in. After the Bill was published a great many observations were made upon it by those interested, and a Select Committee was appointed to consider the subject. As regarded the composition of that Committee he might mention that he took an unusual step, being anxious that the interests of the zemindars should be fully and completely represented. There happened to be two vacancies in the Legislative Council, and he requested the zemindars to recommend to him a gentleman to fill one of them. This they accordingly did, and the result was that the zemindars were very ably represented. The other vacancy he filled up by the appointment of the Maharajah of Durbhunga, one of the largest owners of land in the Province of Bengal. The Committee reported in 1884, making considerable changes in the Bill. The Bill was then reprinted, and from March to November, 1884, was before the public. If there was any subject which had been fully and thoroughly discussed, it was the Law of Landlord and Tenant in Bengal. The time had now in his opinion come when Lord Dufferin was perfectly justified in passing the Bill. The changes which had been made in the Bill were, as his noble Friend (the Earl of Kimberley) had explained, mainly in favour of the zemindars. Athough not knowing the details of those changes, he was inclined to think that they were likely to be too much in favour of the landowners. He entirely concurred in the opinion expressed by his noble Friend the Secretary of State for India that Lord Dufferin was right in passing the Bill, as now it had been amply considered in all its bearings.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS remarked, that he did not in the least dispute that the discussion on this measure had lasted over many years. The point he raised was, that the changes made in the Bill by the late Committee were such that the Bill ought to have been reprinted and circulated before being passed. All that they asked for was to have an opportunity of seeing the Bill. As to the character of the Bill, he would not discuss it further except by stating that Sir Richard Garth, the Chief Justice, had said that he looked with horror and dismay upon this revolutionary measure.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY explained that he had received a copy of the Bill as amended by the Select Com-

mittee; what he had not yet received was a copy of the Bill as passed only a day or two ago by the Legislative Council.

EGYPT—MILITARY EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN—VOTE OF THANKS TO THE TROOPS

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY, in rising to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to propose that a vote of thanks be awarded by Parliament to General Lord Wolseley and the Forces under his command for the able manner in which the military expeditionary force was conducted for the intended rescue of the late General Gordon and his garrison in Khartoum? said, that he had observed that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington), in bringing forward the Supplementary Estimates in the other House, had made what he might term a merely parenthetical allusion to the conduct of our troops and the manner in which the Expeditionary Force had been handled, observing that no blame was to be attached in any way to the Military Force or to Lord Wolseley for having failed in the immediate object for which they had been sent out. On being twitted by an hon. Member with the small meed of praise he had bestowed, the noble Marquess had replied that such was not his intention, and that the Government were deeply sensible of the able and gallant manner in which Lord Wolseley and the Force under his command had acted. For his own part, he thought that if the Government were satisfied with the conduct of the Expedition, the Government ought, considering that the troops were about to go into what might be called summer cantonments, to show some recognition of their services by a direct Vote of Thanks from Parliament.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, that a similar Question was to be put in the other House that evening, and his answer to the noble Earl would be the same as that given by the Secretary of State for War—namely, that, in the opinion of the Government, the Question was at present somewhat premature. He could assure the noble Earl that it was not from any want of appreciation of the gallant and magnificent services of Lord Wolseley and the officers and men under him that the Government had come to that conclusion. The courage and endurance shown by the officers, non-commissioned officers, and men of every branch of the Service had elicited the warmest feeling of gratitude, not only in the minds of the Government, but, he might also say, of all their countrymen. He could assure the House that the Government were fully sensible of the services which had been rendered by our Forces in the Soudan.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY said, he considered the reply of the noble Earl a most unsatisfactory one. ["Order!"] As he was called to Order, he would give Notice that on that day week he would bring forward a Resolution on the subject.

ELECTION OF SCOTCH REPRESENTATIVE PEERS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY asked the Lord Chancellor, Whether he can inform the House why a full report of the proceedings at Holyrood House on the 17th of February last, on the occasion of the assembly of the Scotch Peers by Royal Proclamation to elect two representatives in the place of the late Earls of Dundonald and Morton, has not been made to this House by the Lord Clerk Register; and whether the Lord Chancellor will call for this usual report to be forwarded from Edinburgh without further delay? He explained that he had been unable to be present at the election in consequence of the death of a near relative. Under these circumstances, he had proposed to exercise his vote by proxy, and had sent it by a noble Friend of his. But he learned from the public prints that a discussion took place as to whether that vote was valid or not. It was stated at the meeting that a full Report of the whole proceedings would, as usual, be sent to the House of Lords; but although three weeks had passed since the re-assembling of Parliament, he had not yet seen the Report.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that the proper Return had been laid on the Table of the House that day. He was informed that it was earlier and not later than usual, considering the date of the election

TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (NO. 1.) BILL [H.L.], (NO. 34.)

A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order of the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council in Ireland, relating to the Mitchelstown and Fermoy Light Railway: And

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (LABOURERS ACT) (NO. 1.) BILL [H.L.], (NO. 35.)

A Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders of the Local Government Board for Ireland under the Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883, relating to the Dunshaughlin and Manorhamilton Unions, and to the town of Trim:

Were *presented* by The LORD PRESIDENT; read 1°.

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 12*th March*, 1885.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN — Benjamin St. John Ackers, esquire, for Gloucester County (Western Division).

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1884-5)—CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART; CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES; CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES; CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Parliamentary Elections (Second Ballot)* [94]; Barristers Admission (Ireland)* [95].

First Reading—Prevention of Crimes Amendment* [93].

Committee — *Report* — Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) (*re-comm.*) [86].

Considered as amended—*Third Reading*—Municipal Voters (Relief) [64], and *passed*.

QUESTIONS.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND)—SCHOOL BOARD FOR LENZIE.

DR. CAMERON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether his attention has been called to a memorial from the inhabitants of Lenzie, praying that facilities be given them to erect Lenzie into a School Board district; whether it is the fact that that portion of Lenzie which is in Cadder parish has to pay an education rate of 10*d.*, and that which is in the School Board district of Kirkintolloch a rate of 7*d.* in the £, and that the public schools provided are so distant and so unsuitable for the requirements of the Lenzie population that a large number of the children have to be sent for education to Glasgow; whether Her Majesty's Inspector, Dr. Kerr, has reported that the alleged deficiency in public school accomodation does actually exist, and calls for immediate remedy; whether Cadder parish is willing to sanction the disjunction for educational purposes of that portion of Lenzie which lies within it; whether the difficulty in the way of submitting the question to a decision of the sheriff does not lie in the fact that no provision is made in the Scottish Education Act for the disjunction of portions of burghal School Board districts; and, whether he will introduce, or would support, if introduced, a short Bill to enable communities included in burghal as well as rural School Board districts to apply to the sheriff for disjunction?

MR. MUNDELLA: A Memorial has been received from the inhabitants of Lenzie to the effect stated in the Question of my hon. Friend, and the facts as set forth in the second paragraph appear to be correct. Dr. Kerr, Her Majesty's Inspector, reports that the public schools at Auchenloch are overcrowded, and those of Kirkintilloch are full. Kirkintilloch objects to the disjunction of Lenzie, while Cadder is willing on certain conditions. We have no power under the Act to separate portions of a parish and a burgh, and unite them under a school board of their own. We think it undesirable to multiply school board areas, and we should prefer that the recommendation of Dr. Kerr was acted upon, and a combination school by the parish and borough set up for Lenzie. We will endeavour to effect this, and secure for the inhabitants of Lenzie a school suitable to their requirements.

DR. CAMERON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the inhabitants of Lenzie did not want combination?

MR. MUNDELLA: Yes Sir; but it would require legislation to separate Lenzie.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ROBERT GRAHAM, CLERK TO THE GUARDIANS, COOTEHILL.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Robert Graham, clerk to the Guardians at Cootehill, gave his evidence on oath before Mr. Mathison, R.L. on 28th January 1885; what is the result of the inquiry he stated, on 5th instant, he had made; and, whether, taking into account the general conduct of Graham, and all the circumstances, he will allow him to hold his situation?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears that Mr. Graham's evidence before Mr. Mathison was not given on oath, but that it was verified next day by a declaration before a magistrate. Mr. Graham is the officer of the Cootehill Board of Guardians, and before coming to a decision on the case, the Local Government Board think it right to communicate with them and to invite an expression of their opinion on Mr. Graham's conduct. A letter in this sense was, I believe, sent to the Guardians yesterday.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND).

Mr. T. A. DICKSON asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether in any Registration Bill to be brought in for the purpose of placing on the registries the great numbers of additional voters entitled to the franchise, provision will be made for the remuneration of clerks of unions, rate collectors, and other officials, for their greatly increased duties, and if the Bill will provide that the expense shall not fall upon the ratepayers?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. Walker): The matter to which the hon. Member refers in this Question is a very important one, and is at the present moment under the consideration of the Irish Government. I will communicate the result to the hon. Member at the earliest moment.

Mr. HEALY asked whether the Irish Government would follow the course adopted in England and Scotland by asking the Irish Revising Barristers as to the character of the Bill for Ireland?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, he could not give any opinion on that matter. The Government were making the best inquiries they could.

HER MAJESTY'S PALACE OF WINDSOR.

Mr. BROADHURST asked the Junior Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is true that the redecoration of Her Majesty's private suite of rooms at Windsor Castle was let on contract last year to a Mr. Cooper of Windsor; whether it is true that the contractor then relet the loose gilt portion by sub-contract, at the lowest possible price, to a cheap shop in Soho (London), and that on the work being taken to its place for fixture, the Inspector of Palaces severely condemned it as a disgraceful work, only permitting it to be fixed on account of the immediate return of Her Majesty, and, on condition, that it was taken down and regilt; and, whether he will see that in the letting of future contracts, guarantees shall be demanded that the work be properly and efficiently done by competent skilled labour, and not hawked about the poorest neighbourhoods of London in search of the cheapest and most inefficient labour?

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, in reply, said, he regretted he was unable to give any information on the subject. It was not a matter for which the Treasury had any responsibility.

Mr. BROADHURST gave Notice that, on going into Committee of Supply on the Vote for the Lord Chamberlain's Office, he would call attention to the matter.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—MONAGHAN WORKHOUSE—DR. HALL, MEDICAL OFFICER.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the language used by Dr. Hall, the medical officer of Monaghan Workhouse, reported in *The Monaghan Standard* of 7th February; whether this official, presiding over an Orange Lodge, is reported to have said—

"Some of them perhaps had read Parnell's utterances a few days ago in county Clare. He said, 'You are the descendants of the men whom Cromwell sent to hell or Connaught. He only succeeded in sending you as far as Connaught.' He (Dr. Hall) considered it was a pity they did not get sent a little further."

whether any repudiation by Dr. Hall of the sentiments attributed to him has appeared; and, if the use of such language by public officials is to be tolerated?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: I have seen a letter from Dr. Hall, in which he explains that the language he used is not quite accurately represented in the newspaper report quoted in the Question. He states that his words did not point to the extreme alternative suggested, but that what he intended to convey was an expression of his opinion that it would have been for the good of the country if those who sympathized with the projects of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had gone across the Atlantic. Dr. Hall is not a public officer in the sense that his whole time is at the disposal of the public; and I do not think the incident calls for any action on the part of the Government.

MR. HEALY asked whether Dr. Hall did not allow a month to pass before he contradicted the report?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he had no information on the point.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—CAVAN CO. FREE FORCE.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the police who are supposed to protect James M'Cullough, of Drumkilla, county Cavan, delayed behind him drinking at the fair of Bailieboro', and did not overtake him till he had got three miles from the town; whether one of the policemen was so much under the influence of drink he rolled on the road; and, whether the expense of these policemen will be charged on the ratepayers of the locality?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: There is no foundation for any of the allegations in this Question. The police who are protecting James M'Cullough are men of exemplary character. They are part of the Free Force of the county, and are not charged on the locality.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE RECESS POLICE.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Were charges of drunkenness and assault brought against the Recess police by Thomas Lydon on the 31st October 1884; why was not a sworn inquiry granted, as demanded, and were the charges forwarded; did the police at Recess then bring two charges against Thomas Lydon, and were the cases dismissed; did the police then bring a charge against Thomas Lydon in connection with illicit whiskey, and was it dismissed on the merits; did the police appeal in the latter case, and did the Recorder of Galway attribute partiality to the Bench who dismissed the case, consisting as it did of two resident magistrates; was Lydon then convicted; and, will the Government obtain from the resident magistrates their opinion on the case, and consider the advisability of remitting the fine?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: Thomas Lydon brought charges of assault and drunkenness against the police at Recess in a letter which he wrote to the District Inspector in November last. The District Inspector investigated the charges, and came to the conclusion that they were groundless. He so informed Lydon, and added that it was open to him, if he wished, to proceed against the police at Petty Sessions. Lydon did not do so, nor did he ask for a sworn inquiry, and the charges were forwarded to the County Inspector. Subsequently, the police brought two charges against Lydon—one for leaving his car on the road without a driver, and the other for furious driving. The first charge was withdrawn, and the second dismissed. Lydon was also charged with having illicit whiskey in his possession; but the Bench, on which there were two Resident Magistrates, dismissed the case on the merits. The Recorder of Galway afterwards reversed this decision, on appeal, and convicted Lydon, and I understand he expressed the opinion that the case was a very clear one. If Lydon desires a remission or mitigation of the penalty imposed, the proper course would be for him to address a Memorial to the Lord Lieutenant, and the facts of the case would then be investigated.

MR. HEALY asked whether there were not more appeals?

[No reply.]

ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC—ALLEGED CESSION OF ISLANDS

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the following statement made by the late Governor General of Canada in *The Nineteenth Century*:—

"It should not be possible for Downing Street to negotiate with France about the abrogation of her fishing rights in Newfoundland without informing Canada of what is contemplated. It should not be possible for British Ministers to propose that France be given islands in the Pacific in lieu of rights in Newfoundland without consulting Australia."

whether the negotiations referred to by Lord Lorne are still pending, or are come to a conclusion; which are the islands in the Pacific that the Government proposed to give to France without consulting Australia; and, whether, before any Treaty is concluded, full information on the subject will be given to the Governments of the Australian Colonies and New Zealand and to the British Parliament?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I have noticed the statement in question. The negotiations referred to are still pending. They relate to the Society Islands, part of the Tahiti group, and at a great distance from any part of Australia. They involve no cession of territory to France, but a possible waiver of rights under a declaration relating to those Islands in return for reciprocal concessions. There is no question of the conclusion of any Treaty. The interests of the Australian Colonies in these negotiations will not be lost sight of; but there is nothing which calls for any departure from the usual course of proceeding in such matters.

THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT—DUTY ON BEER

MR. HICKS asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in consideration of the very serious and continued reduction in the value of barley since the substitution of a Duty on Beer for the Malt Duty, a measure which was brought in professedly to benefit the farmers, he will make provision in the Budget for a reduction of the Duty on Beer brewed from malt and hops, to a sum representing the real equivalent of the Duty on Malt under the old system?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I am afraid that my only answer to the hon. Member must be that I cannot tell him or the House what will be in my Budget before I make my Financial Statement next month.

MR. HICKS gave Notice that he would ask whether the right hon. Gentleman would state the number of quarters of barley returned in 1884 as having been sold below 32s. per quarter?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I cannot give that information; it is not in my power.

NAVY—ARMOURED VESSELS—ERROR IN RETURNS

SIR EDWARD J. REED asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, With reference to the Return of Her Majesty's "Ships Built and Building" lately presented by him to this House, with what object he has inserted, under the heading "Armoured Vessels," seventeen recently built vessels which are not armoured, and which were described as "Unarmoured Vessels" in the Return "Navy (Ships Built)," presented to Parliament by Command of Her Majesty in August last, and printed by Order of this House; and, whether the Diagram attached to his Return, which purports to compare the tonnage of "Armoured Ships" built by the present Board of Admiralty with that built by their predecessors has been so constructed as to comprise all, or any, of these seventeen unarmoured ships; and, if so, whether he will cause an amended Return and Diagram, to be forthwith presented, showing the correct amounts of armoured tonnage?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: I regret that the error to which the Question refers should have escaped observation. It will be corrected in an amended Return. I desire to add that the Return which has been presented to the House is intended to combine all the particulars which have hitherto been given in Returns moved for by the late Mr. Laird, the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigtown Burghs, and by my Predecessors in the Office of Secretary to the Admiralty. In the Diagram attached to the Return the tonnage of "Armoured Ships" does not include any unarmoured ships, except for the

year 1882-3, when the *Polyphemus* and *Mersey* were classed as armoured.

SIR EDWARD J. REED said, he should like to ask whether, in view of the great importance of the error, it had been traced to its source?

[No reply.]

SPAIN—COMMERCIAL NEGOTIATIONS —THE SPANISH ANTILLES.

MR. TOMLINSON asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is now prepared to state whether the Government intend to enter upon any negotiations for the purpose of relieving British trade with the Spanish Antilles from the adverse differential treatment to which it is now subjected?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir Robert Morier, who has returned to Madrid, has been instructed to bring forward this subject in the negotiations which he will enter upon with the Spanish Government during his stay in that capital.

CIVIL SERVICE APPOINTMENTS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the appointment of a new Committee on Civil Service Expenditure, he will, in accordance with the spirit of the Report of a former Committee of this House, of which he was Chairman, order a suspension of all new appointments to Class I. and the Upper Division clerkships, particularly as the inquiry may show that there will be a redundancy of such appointments in various Departments; whether any temporary inconvenience occasioned by the suspension of new appointments might not readily be met by the transfer of men who are already declared to be redundant in certain Departments; whether he has been able to transfer any of the redundant clerks from the Customs to fill vacancies in Class I. or the Higher Division elsewhere; and, whether he is aware that, notwithstanding his statement and the recommendations of the Committee of which he was Chairman, and the fact of there being an existing redundancy in certain offices, the Civil Service Commissioners have just held an examination for new appointments to Class I. and the Upper Division?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The hon. Member can hardly have appreciated the meaning of the answer which I gave to him on the 7th of November last. I explained to him that until lately I had had nothing to do with the matters with which the Report of the Committee of 1873 dealt; and I pointed out to him that the recommendations of the Committee itself, even if they had been followed out, were not what the hon. Member's Question implied. As to the present position of the question, the appointment of the Committee on Civil Service Expenditure is resisted, and perhaps it will not be carried. But even if it is carried, I cannot assume that its inquiries will result in all appointments to superior clerkships being suspended, and it is quite clear to me that the present redundant Customs clerks are not competent to fill several offices which are or may become vacant. As to his third Question, no redundant clerks from the Customs have been appointed to fill vacancies in the first class. They passed examinations of a very inferior character to those which first-class clerks are required to pass.

SOUTH AFRICA—WHITE ADVENTURERS IN STELLALAND.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR (for Sir WILLIAM M'ARTHUR) asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true, as reported in the Cape papers, that Mr. Rhodes, the Deputy Commissioner, promised the white adventurers in Stellaland that the titles to land contained in the register of the so-called Government of that territory would be recognised by England; and, if so, whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to sanction grants of land without inquiry as to whether they were obtained from the natives by legal means or by violence?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I am unable to add anything to the information which is already in the possession of my hon. Friend in the Blue Books laid last year before Parliament. In July Mr. Mackenzie entered into the following undertaking (page 125, C. 4,194, August):—

"I ratify the claims to the farms which were drawn by lottery by the original volunteers under David Massouw, or otherwise that farms of equal value or fair compensation be granted to those volunteers or the holders of their titles."

In September, Mr. Rhodes, who had succeeded Mr. Mackenzie, ratified this, and agreed page 123, C. 4,213, October) "that the land titles of Stellaland be recognized." Early in December, Sir Charles Warren announced to the Stellalanders that the settlement would be adhered to. Sir Hercules Robinson, a few days later, telegraphed that, in his opinion, the settlement of the 8th of September should be adhered to, and the Secretary of State, in reply, approved. The principle adopted, therefore, appears to be that, provided the White men can be confirmed in their present occupation on conditions equitable for the Natives, Her Majesty's Government do not, as at present advised, propose to interfere. They reserve, however, all final conclusions until they have the result of the investigation which, apparently, is now being conducted by Sir Charles Warren, as there may be cases in which it would be impossible to sanction the grant.

ZANZIBAR—SUCCESSION TO THE SOVEREIGNTY.

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government will lay upon the Table Papers relating to the succession to the Sovereignity of Zanzibar?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The subject of the succession has not been discussed by Her Majesty's Government. There are consequently no Papers to be laid.

MR BOURKE: Are there any Papers upon the subject which have come into the possession of the Government since they came into Office?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am not aware of any, but I will inquire.

EGYPT—PRINCE BISMARCK—THE PAPERS

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government can lay upon the Table any Despatch supporting the statement of Prince Bismarck, that upon several occasions he had been asked to tender "advice or a hint" to the English Government as to how it should deal with Egypt, or as to what it might do in Egypt which would at the same time meet with the approval of Prince Bismarck?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government do not propose to lay any more Papers, whether of the time of the late or of the present Administration, relating to the controversy in question.

WEST AFRICAN CONFERENCE—THE PAPERS.

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When the Papers relating to the West African Conference will be laid upon the Table?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Despatches from Sir Edward Malet, giving the results of the Conference, were distributed yesterday. The remainder of the Papers will be laid as soon as the translations of the Protocols and accompanying Papers are completed. It is expect that they will be ready next week.

MR. BOURKE: Cannot the Convention be laid on the Table?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: All Protocols and Papers will be in the hands of Members next week.

BRITISH MINISTERS ABROAD—THE EMBASSY AT CONSTANTINOPLE.

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, How much longer is this Country to be left unrepresented by an Ambassador at the Ottoman Porte?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir Edward Thornton will proceed to Constantinople as Her Majesty's Ambassador as soon as the requirements of the Public Service will permit of his leaving St Petersburg.

NAVY—THE ENGINEERS' COMMITTEE—THE REPORT.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he will state the reason for the delay in coming to a conclusion on the Report of the Committee which was laid before the Lords Commissioners in November or December last; and when action on the Report may be expected?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The Report of the Committee on the Engineers has led to the consideration of many important questions of detail with reference to relative rank, retiring allowance, and uniform. It has not yet been possible

to arrive at a conclusion on all these points.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND) —EDUCATION IN THE HIGHLANDS— MR CRAIK'S REPORT.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether his attention has been directed to the following paragraph in Paper (C. 4,261, of 1884, page 4), written by Mr. Craik of the Scottish Education Department:—

"I may perhaps be permitted to refer to the regret expressed to me by several of those who take an interest in Education in the Highlands, that statements with regard to the Education Acts were admitted in evidence by the Commissioners without being subjected to the test of cross-examination, which would have been most useful in exposing their fallacies, and perhaps in explaining more fully to the people the advantages of making use of the opportunities which the Acts throw open;"

whether he is aware that the sittings of the Crofters' Commission, referred to in the above paragraph, were advertised, and all the evidence taken in public; whether the inquiries made by Mr. Craik were conducted in private; whether he will order the notes (if any) taken by Mr. Craik at the time of his inquiries, to be published and laid upon the Table, giving dates, localities, and persons; and, whether, if this cannot be done, he will order the paragraph reflecting upon a public Commission, to be withdrawn and cancelled?

MR. MUNDELLA: Mr. Craik assures me that he had no intention of reflecting upon the Commission. He was instructed to inquire and report to the Department as to the best means of meeting the educational requirements of the crofters, and he naturally made himself acquainted with the views of those in the localities who are most interested, and have had most to do with educational work. I have myself heard similar expressions of regret that more evidence of the kind referred to was not taken by the Commission. I understand that some Members of the Commission have expressed their satisfaction with the Report. There are no notes of Mr. Craik's that can be laid on the Table of this House.

RAILWAYS INDIA—THE QUETTA RAILWAY.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he is now prepared to state what progress has been made with the Quetta Railway; whether the means of communication with Quetta by railway will be accelerated by means of works of a temporary character; and whether any works for a military railway will be undertaken in the direction of Candahar?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The despatch from the Government of India on the subject of this railway has now been received. The whole of the earthwork from Hurnai to Gurkai, 65 miles, with the exception of the heavy cutting at Mud Gorge, and some other trifling portions, has been completed. More than half of the tunnel headings of the Chappar Rift have been driven through; material for most of the bridges has been collected; and the final portion of the line to Quetta has been planned and marked out. The line will probably be opened throughout for traffic in the course of 1887-8. I am not able to say how far it might be possible to accelerate the communications by means of works of a temporary character. There is no present intention of extending the line beyond Shebo.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked if the hon. Gentleman would inquire whether the works could be accelerated?

MR. J. K. CROSS said, that as soon as the tunnel was completed it might be possible to accelerate the other portion of the works. He would make inquiry.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—OLDCASTLE PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. SHEIL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the ratepayers of the Union of Oldcastle, in the county of Meath, are burdened with the sum of £150 for the maintenance of an illegitimate and deserted child named James Farelly; that the magistrates of the Oldcastle Petty Sessions signed a warrant for the arrest of the mother of the said child, which they afterwards cancelled; that by so acting the magistrates enabled the putative father, a wealthy Protestant, to avoid the payment of maintenance for the child; whether the conduct of the magistrates was legal; and, whether redress will be given to the ratepayers of Oldcastle?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: A complaint similar to that described in this Question has been made by the Board of Guardians of Oldcastle Union

to the Lord Chancellor, who, after investigating the circumstances, has arrived at the conclusion that the magistrates were perfectly right in recalling the warrant, which, on the face of it, was illegal. He adds that by so doing they did not in any way enable the person who by law was liable to pay for the maintenance of the child to avoid that payment

ARMY—ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH CADETS

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Gentlemen Cadets of the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich have, this term, been deprived of two small intermediate meals, to which they had previously been accustomed, whether this has been done from motives of economy or retrenchment, and, whether, since the interval between 7.55 A.M. for breakfast, and 2.15 P.M. for luncheon, is larger than is desirable for growing youths undergoing constant exertion, mentally and bodily, he will inquire whether the scale of charges already paid for board and education may not be sufficient to admit of a better arrangement?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Some variation has been made in the hours of the principal meals in the interests of the cadets themselves and on the recommendation of the medical officer. This has involved the abolition of two small meals, but the luncheon has been improved. It is not anticipated that any saving will result from the change. I may add that the cadets are understood to be pleased with the new arrangement

SIR HENRY TYLER asked whether the noble Marquess did not think that the interval between 7.55 A.M. and 2.15 P.M. was too long for growing youths, who were constantly employed, to go without food?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The medical authorities are better able to judge of that than I am.

POOR LAW IRELAND—ELECTIONS.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, as President of the Local Government Board in Ireland, he will take steps to secure that, in the forthcoming Poor Law elections, the returning officers shall be required to perform their duties in an impartial manner; whether he will direct them either to furnish copies of the lists of electors in full to the candidates or their agents on receiving reasonable payment for same, or else permit them to copy the lists during office hours; and, as the claims to vote lodged by owners of property contain long and complicated details necessarily requiring time to examine in order to ascertain their correctness, whether he will direct the returning officers to give facilities for the inspection of same by the candidates and their agents before the scrutiny of votes is held?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Local Government Board have no reason to apprehend that the Returning Officers will not discharge their duties at the coming elections in an impartial manner, and they see no necessity to make special regulations to govern their proceedings, or to amend the General Order on the subject, which has been in force for many years. The Local Government Board have recently re-issued to Returning Officers their instructions as to the mode in which these elections are to be conducted

MR. W. J. CORBET asked whether it was not a fact that during the past three or four years numerous complaints were made against the Returning Officers in the Unions of Baltinglass, Rathdrum, and Shillelagh by popular candidates, and that upon investigation the elections of several Conservative candidates were declared void; and whether the right hon. Gentleman considered that a satisfactory state of things to which he would give his sanction?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am aware that there have been numerous complaints. What I say is that there is no need for new regulations, and the old regulations, if properly carried out, are sufficient; and, by way of stimulating the memory of the Returning Officers, the Local Government Board have re-issued those regulations.

EPPING FOREST ACT, 1878—SALE OF LANDS

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has observed that it is intended to sell about four acres of Epping Forest to the Woodford Local

Board; and, whether such sale is not in contravention of "The Epping Forest Act, 1878," s. 7, sub-section 2, which says—

"Subject to the provisions of this Act the Conservators shall not sell, demise, or otherwise alienate any part of the Forest?"

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he had received information from the City authorities that this land was taken by the Woodford Local Board under the compulsory powers conferred upon them by the Public Health Act of 1882. The civic authorities, therefore, had no option in the matter.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — TIPPERARY GRAND JURY—BENEDINE BRIDGE, NENAGH.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Great Southern and Western Railway Company of Ireland agreed to give the Grand Jury of the county Tipperary a sum of £200, for the construction of a suitable approach to Benedine Bridge, near Nenagh, on the Company's Line from Nenagh to Bird Hill; whether said approach would run through the lands of Mr. George Bolton, Crown Solicitor for the county, and whether Mr. George Bolton subsequently received the sum of £200 from the Grand Jury; whether Mr. George Bolton had not, for his own convenience, agreed to construct the new approach at his own expense, if the Grand Jury allowed him to receive the £200; whether the presentment for the nominal sum of 2*s.* 6*d.* for the construction of said approach was taken out by Mr. Bolton's clerk and steward, William Clear, in the year 1878, and a portion of the approach laid out; whether the approach has not yet been made, and does Mr. Bolton, notwithstanding, still retain the £200; whether Mr. Bolton is solicitor to the Grand Jury; and, what course the Government will take in the matter?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have received a telegram from the secretary of the Grand Jury of Tipperary, in which he states that a presentment was made for 2*s.* 6*d.* by the Nenagh Grand Jury to legalize an alteration in a road through the Bolton property. The Railway Company contributed £200, which Mr. Bolton received. The works are nearly finished, and the old road is not interfered with. Mr. Bolton is solicitor to the Grand Jury. There is nothing in this which calls for the interference of Government.

ARMY — THE ROYAL ENGINEERS— MILITARY FOREMEN OF WORKS.

MR. CAUSTON asked the Secretary of State for War, If the Military Foremen of Works of the Royal Engineers, referred to in his reply to the honourable and learned Member for Chatham on 2nd March, will, when commissioned, perform the duties of Regimental Quartermaster or duties of a professional nature in the Royal Engineer Department?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: It is not contemplated that these quartermasters should perform regimental duty. The duties will be strictly professional in the Royal Engineer Department. The hon. Member may not be aware that the rank of quartermaster is conferred in several cases which do not involve regimental duty as such.

ARMY—QUARTERMASTERS.

MR. CAUSTON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the statements of the disabilities of Army Quartermasters, which have been recently received in the War Office, had been previously seen, supported, and recommended by His Royal Highness the Field Marshal Commanding in Chief or by the Adjutant General of the Army?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The statements respecting the position of the quartermasters have been under the consideration of various branches of the War Department, including, of course, the Military Departments; but it is contrary to official practice to publish the opinions given confidentially to the Secretary of State by his military advisers.

THE NATIONAL GALLERY—PHOTOGRAPHS OF PICTURES.

MR. TOMLINSON asked the Junior Lord of the Treasury, as representing the First Commissioner of Public Works, Whether he can state what were the arrangements under which Messrs. Braun and Co. of Germany, and Messrs. Goupil and Co. of Paris were allowed to photograph the pictures at the National Gallery; whether any English firm of pho-

tographers would be allowed the same facilities as to taking pictures from the walls or removing the glass, or otherwise, as were allowed to those firms, or either of them, or would be allowed the use of the front of the Gallery for any temporary building; whether any arrangement was made with Messrs. Braun and Co. or Messrs. Goupil and Co. as to the price at which the pictures were to be sold, or as to allowing any copies free of cost to any public institution; whether any payment was made by Messrs. Braun and Co. or Messrs Goupil and Co. for the privileges accorded to them; and, whether he will lay upon the Table any Papers relating to the subject?

MR HERBERT GLADSTONE was understood to say that the Office of Works, on the recommendation of the Trustees of the National Gallery, assented to the erection of the temporary building necessary for the photographing of these pictures, as they would in any similar case recommended by the Trustees. The question of the photographing was one for the consideration of the Trustees, over whom the Office of Works had no authority. The only papers in the Office of Works were the two letters asking and giving the above-mentioned permission.

FISHERIES (IRELAND)—TRAWLING.

COLONEL NOLAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been directed to that portion of the Report of the Royal Commission on Trawling which states that in-shore fishermen and fishing may be sometimes injured by trawling; if he is aware that trawling is prohibited in Dublin Bay, but has lately been allowed in Galway Bay; is he aware that the Galway fishermen are opposed to trawling, and, will he take steps to renew the former prohibition in Galway Bay?

MR CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I explained to the hon. and gallant Member in November last the circumstances in which, after a series of inquiries and experiments carried on for four years, it was decided in 1877 to allow trawling in Galway Bay. The Inspectors of Fisheries inform me that they have not since seen any reason to alter the decision then arrived at. I have not yet seen the Report of the Royal Commission on Trawling, which I understand has not yet been distributed. If the hon. and gallant Member desires it, I shall be happy to lay on the Table a copy of the Reports which led up to the result I have mentioned in 1877.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE NEW WORKS AT MEELICK.

MR ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he is aware that the new cutting by the Board of Works between Victoria Lock and Hamilton Lock at Meelick went right through the way by which many people in the district had access to the chapel and post office at Meelick, and that now they have to go a round of nearly two miles for that purpose; and, whether the Board of Works will be directed to restore the way over the Shannon where it before existed, which the people claim as a right?

MR. HIBBERT: I have looked into the matter with the aid of a map. There does not appear to have been any right of way. At the same time, it is possible that inconvenience may have been caused to the people of the district by the new works. Local inquiries will be made, and if it should be proved that any hardship is appreciable in amount or extent to a considerable number of people, steps will be taken to remedy it.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES—REPORTS OF THE REGISTRARS.

MR E. STANHOPE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If his attention has been called to the fact that the Reports of the Registrars of Friendly Societies are delivered many months after date, when the information contained in them is, in many respects, obsolete; and, if he will take steps to secure an earlier circulation of the Reports?

MR. HIBBERT: The Reports of the Registrars of Friendly Societies are generally delivered many months after the close of the year to which they relate; but this can hardly be said to make them obsolete. New arrangements have been made, which will enable them to be brought out somewhat earlier in future. The Returns on which these Reports are based are by Statute not due until June, and often come in much

later. These Returns have to be examined and abstracted before publication; and as the results are very voluminous, containing large masses of figures, it is therefore not possible to expedite publication beyond a certain point. A new arrangement, however, has been made, which it is hoped may facilitate matters.

MR. BROADHURST asked, whether the delay was not mainly owing to the great want of sufficient labour in this veryuseful Department?

MR. HIBBERT said, he believed the delay rested mainly with the Friendly Societies themselves.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES, IRELAND—PROFESSOR D'ARCY THOMPSON.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the full amount of pension to which Professor D'Arcy Thompson would be entitled, if appointed Librarian, would be seventy-five pounds per annum; if, since the date of his appointment as Acting Librarian in 1876, the Irish Government have made twenty-nine appointments in the three Queen's Colleges, all entitled to full pensions, namely: two Presidencies; three Librarianships; one Registrarship; and twenty-three Professorships; and, whether, under these circumstances, the Government will persist in refusing Professor D'Arcy Thompson's reasonable claim after twenty-one years' service in the service of the Crown in Ireland?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: £75 is the salary of the office of Librarian in the Queen's College, Galway, and Professor Thompson receives that sum as Acting Librarian. The amount of his pension will depend upon the length of his service when he comes to retire. It is true that several appointments to which pensions are attached have been made in the Queen's Colleges since 1876, but that is not the point. The question is whether the Government should now create this new vested interest in connection with the Queen's Colleges; and, having regard to all the circumstances, they have no hesitation in coming to a conclusion in the negative.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman what is the maximum Professor D'Arcy Thompson would be entitled to?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I cannot say.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I beg to give Notice that, in consequence of the unsatisfactory answers of the right hon. Gentleman, I will call attention to the matter on another occasion.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—SUMMONS FOR TRESPASS IN HUNTING AT BAGENALSTOWN.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If the Bagenelstown magistrates allege as a reason for dismissing the summons of Mr. M'Grath against the huntsman Duffield that there was no evidence of wilful tresspass; if so, was any witness called for Duffield; did he appear himself in support of this contention; or is it the fact that the prosecutor was the only witness in the case, and that he proved the trespass and the order to leave his holding, but that the Bench nevertheless said M'Grath had only a civil remedy?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): I have no precise information, but am willing to assume that M'Grath was the only witness examined, and that he proved that Duffield entered upon his lands while hunting, and that he ordered him to leave. Under these circumstances, I think the magistrates were right in holding that such a trespass was not wilful or malicious so as to constitute an offence punishable by summary conviction, but was the subject of a civil action.

MR. HEALY: Might I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman, as he has now given a legal opinion, is it his view that if a huntsman trespasses on the lands of a farmer he has no remedy but a civil action?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND: That is my opinion.

POOR LAW ELECTIONS (IRELAND).

MR. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Local Government Board in Ireland will permit returning officers at Poor Law elections to cause voting papers for non-resident voters to be sent to the houses of other persons without having received any instructions to that effect from the voters themselves, or even with such instructions; and, if in

the latter case only, then in what form should such instructions be given, whether non-resident voters should not attend at the office of the returning officer, there receive a voting paper, and fill up same in the presence of the officer; and, whether the Local Government Board will permit returning officers to cause such voting papers in considerable numbers to be left at the offices of political agents, or at Orange Lodges, to be there filled up by the persons in charge of these establishments?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The instructions of the Local Government Board are that voting papers for non-resident voters and proxies are to be delivered at the respective places appointed by them in the electoral division or ward. If any case is brought to the notice of the Board in which the Returning Officer deviated from his instructions in this respect, the Board will be prepared to take due notice of the matter.

BOARD OF INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION IRELAND.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any steps will be taken to remove the inequality in the Intermediate Education Board in Ireland, where there are three Catholic Members, and four who are not Catholic; whether the necessary result of the existing condition of things is that if a member, not a Catholic, is absent through illness or other causes, both sides are equal whereas if a Catholic is absent the result is four against two; whether this was not actually the case during a long time in consequence of the failing health of the late Lord O'Hagan; whether it is a fact that whereas there are a Protestant clergyman and a Presbyterian minister on the Board, there is no Roman Catholic clergymen; and, whether the great majority of the students examined, and the successful students, are Catholics from Catholic schools?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Board of Intermediate Education in Ireland is a mixed Board, consisting of three Roman Catholics, two Protestant Episcopalians, and two Presbyterians. The majority of the students examined, and of the successful students, are, I understand, Roman Catholics. Assuming, for the moment, what I regard as most unlikely - namely, that this Board, which deals with no religious questions, always divides as Catholics and non-Catholics, no doubt the results would be, as stated in the Question, if a member of one side or the other were absent, and all the other members were present; and theoretical contingencies of the kind may be almost indefinitely multiplied; but the defect—if it is one—is not peculiar to the Intermediate Board. The true test is the practical result; and the Government have no reason to suppose that the existing arrangement does not work well, or that the public are dissatisfied with it. It is true that hitherto there has been no Roman Catholic clergyman on the Board; but this will no longer be the case, as His Excellency has just appointed the Rev. John Egan, D.D., a Fellow of the Royal University, and at one time Principal of the Ennis Diocesan Training College, to the seat rendered vacant by the death of Lord O'Hagan.

NEW GUINEA—OCCUPATION OF NORTHERN COAST BY GERMANY.

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government have reason to believe that the Northern Coast of New Guinea has been, or is about to be, taken over by a private German Association for colonization and administration similar to the British North Borneo Company; whether such an arrangement would give Germany any greater sovereign rights in New Guinea than Great Britain has in Borneo; and, whether the right of such private Association to exercise jurisdiction over British subjects will be recognized by Her Majesty's Government?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: In reply to the first Question of the hon. and learned Gentleman, Her Majesty's Government have no information as to the proposed administration of the Northern Coast of New Guinea by a private German Association similar to the North Borneo Company. In reply to the second Question, no sovereign rights are claimed by Great Britain in Borneo. The third is a hypothetical Question, and cannot be answered without a knowledge of the conditions under which such an Association would claim to exercise jurisdiction.

MR. GORST: I would ask whether Her Majesty's Government will make some inquiry as to the practical administration under which North New Guinea is placed by the German Government?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Of course, we always make inquiries in such cases.

CYPRUS—M. BISTACHI, CHIEF INSPECTOR OF REVENUE.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is a fact that, on the sworn information of Mr. C. Sarsboghi, clerk to the Nicosia magistrates, a warrant for the arrest of Mr. Bistachi, Chief Inspector to Revenue, was issued; whether, during the period between the swearing of the information, its consideration by Sir Robert Biddulph, and the placing of the warrant in the hands of the police, Mr. Bistachi was allowed to leave the Island; whether the police have followed him, and whether any steps will be taken to secure his arrest; and, whether it is a fact that the Auditor occupies the same dwelling-house at Nicosia as Bistachi did up to the day of his absconding?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: The sworn information of Mr. Saripolos was not preferred until after Mr. Bistachi had left Cyprus for Alexandria on leave of absence. He was immediately ordered by telegram to return, and has telegraphed that he will do so. The police would have no authority to arrest him in Egypt, where he had gone; and the offence with which he is charged—namely, receiving a bribe, is not an extraditable offence within the Schedule of the Cyprus Extradition Order in Council, 1881. Though we have no official information as to the latter part of the Question, I believe it to be a fact that the two gentlemen referred to, being bachelors, occupy separate parts of one large building.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, whether it was within the knowledge of the Colonial Office that Petitions, largely signed by both Greeks and Catholics, had been presented through the Christian Mission praying that the corrupt administration of Cyprus may cease, that the British will evacuate the Island, and that it may join the Hellenic Kingdom?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: I have no knowledge of it.

ORDNANCE SURVEY—COUNTY OF HEREFORD.

MR. RANKIN asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the cause of the great delay in the completion of the survey of the county of Hereford, and when it is probable that the 25-inch scale maps will be published for that county; and, whether it would be practicable to publish maps of those portions of the county which were already completely surveyed without waiting for the completion of the survey of the whole county?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE: The detailed survey of Herefordshire was begun last year, and has been proceeded with uninterruptedly, more than half the county having now been surveyed. There has been no delay in carrying on the work. The publication of the maps on the 25-inch and 6-inch scales of the northern portion of the county has been commenced, and will be continued as the plans of the different parishes are finished, as usual, without waiting for the completion of the survey of the whole county. I am not able to give the hon. Member a specific date when the publication of the plans of the entire county will be finished.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—TEACHERS IN VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS—MR. DRAPER.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether his attention has been called to the dismissal of Mr. E. Draper, who had been for twenty-six years master of the parochial school of St. Giles, Northampton, for "want of sympathy with the general religious and church work of the parish, as evinced by his long-continued absence from the church," and the unsatisfactory Government Report just received; whether, in view of the fact that Mr. Draper's school earned more than 17*s.* 6*d.* per head and the "good merit" grant, the Department has its dissatisfaction with Mr. Draper; and, whether want of sympathy with the general religious and church work of a parish is to be regarded as a fitting reason for the dismissal of a master of a school receiving a Government grant?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Education Department has no complaint whatever

against Mr. Draper. He is a good and successful teacher, his school was well reported on at the last examination, and he has earned a good grant. But it must be borne in mind that the teachers are the servants of the managers, not of the Education Department; and we have no power to interfere with the dismissal of a teacher by the managers of a voluntary school, whether the reasons for dismissal are justifiable or not.

THE ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS—ADMINISTRATION BY THE CHARITY COMMISSIONERS.

MR. JOHN MORLEY asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he proposes, during the present Session, to move for a Select Committee to inquire into the administration of the Endowed Schools Act by the Charity Commission; or whether he proposes to defer the inquiry until the new Parliament?

MR. MUNDELLA: I was fully prepared to move for a Select Committee to inquire into the operation of the Endowed Schools Acts; but on conferring with several Members who are anxious for inquiry I found them all agreed that an inquiry during the present Session would prove abortive, and that it would be better to postpone it until the first Session of a new Parliament. Under these circumstances, I do not propose to move for a Committee this Session unless it is the general wish of the House that I should do so.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked if the Charity Commissioners would postpone the completion of any further scheme until the Committee should have reported, or, at least, those schemes such as were proposed for Sutton Coldfield and Horsham—with respect to which it was alleged that the rights of the poorer classes were being taken away in order to provide higher education at a cheap rate for the children of the rich—should be held over?

MR. MUNDELLA said, that it was impossible to arrest the work. The Commissioners would go on completing their schemes. He knew nothing of the schemes until they came before the Education Department. If there were any schemes involving such a question as that alluded to he would think it his duty to suspend them.

PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS—IRREGULAR PUBLICATION—THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON TRAWLING.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he has yet been able to ascertain whether the irregularity of the Report of the Royal Commission on Trawling having been sent to the newspapers one week before it was laid upon the Table of this House, is owing to a breach of confidence on the part of the Government printer, or any other person having official access to the papers of the Commission; and, if not, could he explain the way in which it occurred? He begged to say that it was not his intention to make any insinuation against the Government printer or any other official; but he had not been allowed to put the Question as he framed it.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that, so far as he could make out, there was no breach of confidence on the part of anyone. The Report of the Commission ought to have been sent to the Home Office; but by some blunder it was sent to the Board of Trade. It reached the Board of Trade on the 28th of February; but it did not find its way to the Home Office till last Saturday. In the meantime, it was supposed that the Report had been sent to the Home Office, by whom it would have been communicated to the Queen and to the House of Commons, and in consequence of that the Report was allowed to be published. The whole thing arose from the blunder of sending it to the Board of Trade, who could not communicate the document to the Queen or the House of Commons.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON: When will it be circulated?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It was circulated last Monday.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON: It has not yet been circulated.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Then I shall make inquiries.

MR. RAIKES: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to state that the publication referred to was made by some official of the Board of Trade?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: No, Sir; I understand that either the Chairman or the Secretary of the Commission, believing it to have been duly communicated to the Queen and the House of

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

the witnesses, Thomas Wilson had no hand in the business, and was at work when his brother James found the rabbit, which he does not hesitate to declare was placed there by the gamekeeper or the policeman, or by both. The Bench sentenced the two men to twenty one days' imprisonment, with hard labour, and, whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the circumstances of the case, and will state whether policemen, who are paid by public money, can be legally employed to act as gamekeepers to private persons?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that as he had not had time to ascertain the facts of the case, he would request the hon. Gentleman to postpone the Question.

LAW AND POLICE - WANDSWORTH POLICE COURT

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has lately again been called by the Local Authorities to the very defective and inadequate accommodation of the Wandsworth Police Court, whereby grave inconvenience and serious impediments to the due administration of justice are occasioned; and, whether he persists in his determination to defer dealing with this matter until after the indefinite date of the passing of the London Government Bill?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have never disputed that the inadequate accommodation at the police court referred to has been the cause of great inconvenience to the public, and I have long endeavoured to get the evil remedied. But I can now only repeat to the hon. Baronet the advice I gave him some months ago. I have exhausted my resources, and I am sorry to say I cannot get the necessary money. I shall be very glad, therefore, if the hon. Baronet will turn his batteries towards the Secretary to the Treasury instead of towards me

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE said, that as it was impossible for him to turn any battery on to the Treasury, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman on Monday whether his determination not to deal with this subject until the London Government Bill had passed would not have the effect of inflicting great inconvenience on the people of the Wandsworth district for several years; and, whether the want of a proper court would not increase whether the London Government Bill passed or not?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I will answer that Question at once. I have no such determination as that attributed to me by the hon. Baronet in the second half of this Question. On the contrary, I have been labouring week after week and month after month to get this thing done, and I do not mean to postpone the matter until after the passing of the London Government Bill.

EGYPT MILITARY EXPEDITION) THE SUAKIN BERBER RAILWAY SUPPLY OF PUMPS.

MR W. H. SMITH asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, with reference to a letter he read from Messrs Tangye alleging that the pumps for the Suakin-Berber water service could not be obtained for some months in England, Whether he is aware that the pumps for the Aldershot experimental service were ordered by Mr Tweddle Messrs S Owens and Co. on the 20th May last, and were completed and sent to Aldershot on the 4th June, and that Messrs S. Owens and Co made all the oil line pumps required by Mr. Tweddle for the Caucasus; if he will state on what date the order for the pumps now making was given to Mr. Tweddle, and on what date they will be delivered in England; and, whether he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Agreement with Messrs Edwards and Tweddle?

MR. BRAND: Yes, Sir; the pumps for the Aldershot trial were ordered from Messrs. Owens and Co., and the orders were completed in about the time mentioned; but they were not duplex pumps. They were much smaller than those required for the Suakin route. Mr. Tweddle informs me that he ordered three sets of Blake's large duplex American pumps from Messrs. Owens for use in the Caucasus; but he considers that they are inferior to the Worthington pumps The right hon. Gentleman will confer a personal favour upon me if he will make inquiries and inform the House as to the time occupied by Messrs Owens in completing the order. I venture to say that the further he pursues his inquiry the more he will find that the action of the Depart-

Commons, thought, in the ordinary course, it might be circulated.

EGYPT (EVENTS IN THE SOUDAN)—KASSALA.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government have received any further information respecting the garrison of Kassala, or whether there has been any further communication with that garrison; and, what are the numbers of the garrison and the inhabitants, respectively, according to the latest advices? The hon. Member added: I wish also to ask another Question on a telegram which I have only received during the last hour, and of which, therefore, I could give no Notice—

"According to rumours from Cairo, Kassala has fallen. Anyhow, mere question of time. Doubtful if Sultan has ever been *bonâ fide* invited to co-operate on fair terms."

I should like to ask whether the Sultan has been on fair terms invited to co-operate?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In reply to the first portion of the hon. Member's Question, I have no further information to give than that contained in the replies already given in this House. According to a statement contained in Sir Evelyn Baring's despatch of December 3, 1883 (Egypt, No. 1, 1884, p. 125), the garrison consisted of 1,259 men. The population in 1881 is stated by Captain Gascoigne to have been from 25,000 to 30,000.

SIR HENRY TYLER: Will the noble Lord answer the further Question?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I must ask the hon. Baronet to put the further Question on the Paper.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Robat Pass, the only pass through the mountains north of Herat available for a railway, is now in Russian or in Afghan possession; and, whether it is within the territory claimed by Russia, but shown in Russian maps to belong to Afghanistan?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Russians have not occupied the Robat Pass. I have no reason to believe that it is the only pass through the mountains north of Herat available for a railway. The House will agree with me that it is not desirable, in the present state of the negotiations, to give information as to the claims of Russia.

MR. GOURLEY (for Mr. STOREY) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether he has noticed the following extract quoted in *The Times* of Tuesday from *The North German Gazette*—

"We have before us a map prepared by the Secretary of State for India, and described as compiled principally from original authorities, in which the boundary of Merv and Herat is drawn about 25 English miles south of the confluence of the Khushk with the Murghab, and 19 miles south of that very Penjdeh, lying on the left bank of the Murghab, and still about 94 miles north of Herat;"

and, whether the India Office is cognizant of, or responsible for, any such map?

MR. J. K. CROSS: The map referred to by *The North German Gazette* is apparently one of Persia prepared at the India Office in 1875 by Major St. John. This map possesses no authority whatever as to any portion of country lying outside the Persian Frontier; but in this map there is a point upon the Khushk River, 25 miles south of the confluence of that river with the Murghab, marked as the boundary between Merv and Herat. All the maps of Turkestan prepared between 1872 and 1883 under the authority of the Government of India show the boundary between Merv and Herat to the north of Penjdeh.

LAW AND POLICE (ENGLAND)—POLICE AS GAMEKEEPERS—ARREST OF LABOURERS FOR PICKING UP A DEAD RABBIT.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to a statement in *The Daily News* of Tuesday last, to the following effect:—Two labourers, James and Thomas Wilson, were engaged in cutting wood, when they were taken into custody by a gamekeeper and a policeman, and one of them charged before the magistrates at Ashford (Kent) Petty Sessions with "going round as if to see if there was anybody about, and then taking up a rabbit." According to the evidence of

the witnesses, Thomas Wilson had no hand in the business, and was at work when his brother James found the rabbit, which he does not hesitate to declare was placed there by the gamekeeper or the policeman, or by both. The Bench sentenced the two men to twenty-one days' imprisonment, with hard labour; and, whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the circumstances of the case, and will state whether policemen, who are paid by public money, can be legally employed to act as gamekeepers to private persons?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that as he had not had time to ascertain the facts of the case, he would request the hon. Gentleman to postpone the Question.

LAW AND POLICE — WANDSWORTH POLICE COURT

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has lately again been called by the Local Authorities to the very defective and inadequate accommodation of the Wandsworth Police Court, whereby grave inconvenience and serious impediments to the due administration of justice are occasioned; and, whether he persists in his determination to defer dealing with this matter until after the indefinite date of the passing of the London Government Bill?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have never disputed that the inadequate accommodation at the police court referred to has been the cause of great inconvenience to the public, and I have long endeavoured to get the evil remedied. But I can now only repeat to the hon. Baronet the advice I gave him some months ago. I have exhausted my resources, and I am sorry to say I cannot get the necessary money. I shall be very glad, therefore, if the hon. Baronet will turn his batteries towards the Secretary to the Treasury instead of towards me

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE said, that as it was impossible for him to turn any battery on to the Treasury, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman on Monday whether his determination not to deal with this subject until the London Government Bill had passed would not have the effect of inflicting great inconvenience on the people of the Wandsworth district for several years; and, whether the want of a proper court would not increase whether the London Government Bill passed or not?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I will answer that Question at once. I have no such determination as that attributed to me by the hon. Baronet in the second half of this Question. On the contrary, I have been labouring week after week and month after month to get this thing done; and I do not mean to postpone the matter until after the passing of the London Government Bill.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY—SUPPLY OF PUMPS

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, with reference to a letter he read from Messrs. Tangye alleging that the pumps for the Suakin-Berber water service could not be obtained for some months in England, Whether he is aware that the pumps for the Aldershot experimental service were ordered by Mr. Tweddle Messrs. S Owens and Co. on the 20th May last, and were completed and sent to Aldershot on the 4th June, and that Messrs. S. Owens and Co made all the oil line pumps required by Mr. Tweddle for the Caucasus; if he will state on what date the order for the pumps now making was given to Mr. Tweddle, and on what date they will be delivered in England; and, whether he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Agreement with Messrs. Edwards and Tweddle?

MR. BRAND: Yes, Sir; the pumps for the Aldershot trial were ordered from Messrs. Owens and Co., and the orders were completed in about the time mentioned; but they were not duplex pumps. They were much smaller than those required for the Suakin route. Mr. Tweddle informs me that he ordered three sets of Blake's large duplex American pumps from Messrs. Owens for use in the Caucasus; but he considers that they are inferior to the Worthington pumps. The right hon. Gentleman will confer a personal favour upon me if he will make inquiries and inform the House as to the time occupied by Messrs. Owens in completing the order. I venture to say that the further he pursues his inquiry the more he will find that the action of the Depart-

ment was fully justified. The present pumps were ordered on the 25th of February. The first arrived on March 3. Mr. Tweddle having taken upon himself to anticipate the formal order, the second arrived on the 10th instant. The third is due to-morrow, and the last three were on board the *Republican*, due on Monday. It is not proposed to lay the contract upon the Table of the House.

MR. J. LOWTHER: I should like to ask the hon. Gentleman whether other communications have been received by the Department from the trade, in addition to the testimonial he read the other day from Messrs. Tangye; and whether he will lay Messrs. Tangye's testimonial on the Table of the House?

MR. RITCHIE: What is the date of the informal order to Mr. Tweddle?

MR. BRAND: In reply to the right hon. Gentleman, I have to say that one other communication has been received from a firm, the name of which I at present forget; but it must be taken *cum grano*. All I can say is that the specifications are now ready, and the tenders will shortly be issued for these pumps. I shall be very agreeably surprised if the orders can be completed in England by the time suggested by the Question of the right hon. Gentleman. As regards the letter of Messrs. Tangye which I read, I do not see that there is any objection to lay it on the Table if the right hon. Gentleman wishes it.

MR. J. LOWTHER: Will the hon. Gentleman obtain it in the form of a sworn information?

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ALLEGED WOUNDING OF DENIS MURPHY AT CASTLEISLAND, CO. KERRY.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How long were the eleven men in county Kerry imprisoned whom the police arrested because of the shooting of Murphy by one of the Force; and is it proposed to make them any compensation?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I find that in consequence of the reprehensible conduct of the policemen in this case, which I have already explained to the House, 11 men were detained in custody for three days and seven hours. The Government are of opinion that the case is one in which they may fairly consider whether some compensation should not be given.

MR. SEXTON: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman what is the charge to be made against the constable?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am not acquainted with the details of the charge; but I have seen a telegram stating that he was brought up before the magistrate and discharged, it being found that the occurrence was an accident. The Coroner's verdict was, I believe, to the same effect; but of these matters I have only telegraphic information.

MR. HEALY: I shall ask to-morrow if it is true that the Coroner's inquest exonerated only one of the two constables; and whether the other constable will be prosecuted for having caused the imprisonment of 11 innocent persons by making a false statement, and inducing others to corroborate it?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN was understood to say that the verdict exonerated both constables, in that it found the occurrence to be an accident. With regard to the culpability of the policemen, he had already said that both had been dismissed from the Force, and that it was intended to prosecute them. Whether the prosecution would be confined to the one of them he could not say.

MR. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that if the Crimes Act comes to be renewed, I will propose a clause to make it penal to spread false reports of charges, especially by the members of the Royal Irish Constabulary.

NAVY—THE TRANSPORT "ARAB."

SIR TOLLEMACHE SINCLAIR asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether or not it is true that the *Arab* transport sailed from Southampton to Suakin on the 17th of February last with only eight boats, which were together capable of carrying about 250 men, whilst there were on board 701 officers and men, besides the ship's complement of about 100 men, making in all about 800 souls, of whom about 550 might have perished in case of fire or shipwreck?

MR. CAINE: It is true that the *Arab* left Southampton with the number of boats stated. This number complies with the requirements of the transport

regulations, and also with the Passengers Act.

THE EDUCATION ACTS—INJUSTICE TO NONCONFORMISTS AT TOTNES

MR. SAMUEL MORLEY asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, If his attention has been drawn to a case of hardship to Nonconformists in the working of the Education Acts at Totnes; the building at present used as a Board School was formerly used as a British School, and is leased to the School Board by the Trustees for a term of years for the education of boys and girls; this building has now become quite inadequate to receive all the pupils; hence the existing Board proposes, instead of increasing the accommodation, to transfer to a Church School all the girls as well as all the infants; whether it is true that the School Board consists of four Episcopalians and one Nonconformist; and, whether he can intervene in the matter?

MR. MUNDELLA: My attention has been drawn to this case, and I have directed inquiry to be made in the locality as to the alleged proposals of the Board, and as to the manner in which the deficiency of accommodation can be suitably supplied. I shall be happy to communicate the results to my hon. Friend when the investigation is complete.

THE METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD—EXPENDITURE

MR. JAMES STUART asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the alleged increased expenditure of the Metropolitan Asylums Board for the year ending Lady Day 1884 of £157,330 (exclusive of that in repayment of loans), as compared with the year ending Lady Day 1880, and, whether he will direct a thorough investigation of the expenditure of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and to give instructions for an exhaustive report thereupon?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: The accounts of the managers of the Metropolitan Asylums District show that, comparing the year ended Lady Day, 1884, with the year ended on the same day in 1880, the expenditure, excluding expenditure out of loans, had increased by £157,000. Without going into the details of the expenditure, it may be observed that since 1880 an asylum for 900 imbecile patients at Darenth has been erected, three hospital ships for small-pox patients have been provided, the North-Western Hospital has been opened, and wharves and ambulance stations have been established. There has also been a large expenditure on alterations and additions at the small-pox and fever hospitals since the date of the Report of the Royal Commission, with the view of diminishing any risk of spread of disease from the hospitals, and also a considerable increase in the payments in respect of principal and interest of loans.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, If the Local Government Board has received a copy of the Report of a Sub-Committee of the Managers of the Metropolitan Asylums Board, and of the notes of evidence taken by such Committee in an investigation into the expenditure of the Metropolitan Asylums Board upon the Eastern Hospital of that Board; and, if so, whether the Local Government Board will order an inquiry to be conducted into all matters relating to such expenditure?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: We have received a copy of the Report of the Committee of the managers of the Metropolitan Asylums District as to their investigation into the expenditure on the Eastern Hospital, and of the notes of the evidence. The investigation extended over 10 days, and the evidence, which is very voluminous, was only received by the Board three days ago. The subject is now under the consideration of the Board, and no decision as to the course to be taken has as yet been arrived at by my right hon. Friend.

ARMY MILITARY EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN—DEFECTIVE CARTRIDGES

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to the following extract from the description of the battle of Abou Klea by the special correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*:

"Possibly much of the wildness of aim was occasioned by the excitement of finding that hundreds of cartridges jammed fast after the

second or third shot. I have since been told by officers that this year our mongrel cartridge sticks worse than ever. Positively at Abou Klea, and later at Metemmeh, I saw scores of weapons rendered temporarily useless. . . . . I myself took up a Martini-Henry, but the third cartridge stuck;"

and, whether he can give the House any information on the subject?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: At present I can only repeat the answer I gave on Tuesday, that the matter is under examination.

PARLIAMENT—PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—COMPLETION OF SIR CHARLES BARRY'S DESIGNS.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Junior Lord of the Treasury, Whether the completion of the Houses of Parliament, according to the designs of the late Sir Charles Barry, has been under consideration of Her Majesty's Government; and, whether it is the case that, if carried out at the estimated cost of £500,000, a saving of upwards of £20,000 per annum would be effected by the discontinuance of rent paid for premises elsewhere?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE: The statement that the completion of the Houses of Parliament, according to the designs of the late Sir Charles Barry, would, if carried out at the estimated cost of £500,000, effect a saving of upwards of £20,000 per annum by the discontinuance of rent paid for premises elsewhere, rests on an assumption which, in the opinion of the First Commissioner of Works, is not accurate. If the hon. Baronet will refer to pp. 20 to 23 of the Civil Service Estimates, he will see that, with some exceptions, it would not be possible, without great inconvenience, to make changes in the position of premises rented by the Government, so as to effect a saving in rent of the amount stated. Moreover, it would be an act of at least very doubtful expediency to lodge Public Departments in the Palace of Westminster.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked, considering the great interest attached to the complete scheme, whether the hon. Gentleman would cause drawings of the complete elevation to be placed in the Library?

MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE replied that the matter should be considered

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1884—INSTRUCTIONS TO CLERKS OF UNIONS AND RATE COLLECTORS IN IRELAND.

MR. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Local Government Board have issued any instructions to the different Clerks of Unions and Poor Rate Collectors in Ireland, pointing out to those officials the increased work which has been imposed on them under the new Franchise Act?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Local Government Board have not issued any such instructions. As I stated, in reply to a Question of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), on the 23rd ultimo, the Board have performed the duty imposed on them by the Act, and have prescribed an altered form of rate book; but they do not consider that it devolves on them to go any further than this in the matter.

MR. KENNY asked if it was intended, in consequence of the increased work to be discharged by these officials, to improve their position?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That Question was asked the other day.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—THE GRAND JURY OF MEATH—EXEMPTION FROM SERVICE.

MR. SHEIL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Is it the fact that Mr. F. H. Langan, a Catholic magistrate in Meath, owner in fee of 1,100 acres, has never been allowed to serve on the Grand Jury for the last ten years, while one of his tenants, Mr. Handy, J.P. a Protestant, has regularly been called on the Grand Jury; if so, can he explain by what right a gentleman of inferior qualification is summoned before one of superior qualification?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The summoning of Grand Juries was a matter for the High Sheriff for the year, and the Executive Government have nothing to say to it. I have, therefore, no information as to the matters stated in the Question.

MR. HEALY: Will the Government take care in the appointment of the High Sheriff that he will be a person suitable for such an appointment?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN'S reply was inaudible.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked, whether it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce a Bill dealing with the Grand Jury Laws in Ireland?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is a Question which I cannot answer.

In reply to Mr. W. J. Corbet.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir. I have said that this question rests entirely with the High Sheriff.

EGYPT—MILITARY EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN—VOTES OF THANKS TO THE TROOPS.

Major General ALEXANDER for Sir John Hay asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is intended to move Parliament to vote its thanks to the seamen and soldiers who fought at Abu Klea, Gubat, and Kerbekan, or to follow the precedent of El Teb and Tamai, and omit the usual vote of thanks for victories?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: In the opinion of the Government it would be rather premature at this moment, when further operations are probably imminent, to come to a decision on this subject. When, in the opinion of the Government, the proper time arrives they will give this subject their best consideration, with reference not only to the precedent referred to, but to the whole of the precedents.

PUBLIC MEETINGS—THE RIOT AT ASTON HALL, BIRMINGHAM.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER asked Mr. Attorney General, If his attention has been called to the case of Regina v. Mack, or Joyce, and to the statements of the learned judge, as to the careless way in which the affidavits therein concerned were drawn; whether culpable negligence was shown on that occasion, by taking the affidavits of men of no character, without due caution and inquiry; and, whether he will give the matter his careful attention, and, if possible, so amend the Law as to render the recurrence of such proceedings impossible?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, he had no access to any information upon the subject which was not open to everyone else. It was quite impossible for him to express an opinion condemnatory of any persons whose case had never been stated to him, and who had not had an opportunity of giving their own views on the subject. As to the question whether he would endeavour to amend the law, he could not see how he could make a declaration on the point; but if the hon. Baronet would make any suggestion he should be very happy to consider it.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER: If I supply the hon. and learned Gentleman with full details of the facts of the case, will he, as Law Officer of the Crown, express an opinion?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): I do not wish to be discourteous to the hon. Baronet; but I fail to see why I ought to express any condemnatory opinion.

EGYPT FINANCE, &c.

Mr. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, having regard to the answer given by the First Lord of the Treasury last Friday, the time has not now arrived for the production of the Papers relating to Egyptian Finance, "without the consent of others concerned?"

The following Question also stood upon the Paper in the name of Mr. Dixon-Hartland:—

"To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, If he has seen the telegram from Cairo in *The Times* of Saturday, which says 'The financial arrangement appears to be quite settled if not signed,' and, whether such financial arrangements are settled; and, if so, how soon they will be submitted to the House?"

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the two Questions referred to the same subject, and he would give the same answer.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND said, his Question was so utterly mutilated by the way it had been altered at the Table that he declined to put it as it appeared on the Paper.

Mr. SPEAKER said, what the hon. Member stated to be mutilation was the omission of a newspaper comment, which was couched in strong language, and did not contain a mere statement of fact.

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: In reply to the right hon. Member for

King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke), I beg to say that it is expected that the Financial Agreement will be signed very shortly, and the Papers and the Agreement will be laid on the Table together.

EGYPT—THE SOUDAN—EMPLOYMENT OF TURKISH TROOPS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that Her Majesty's Ministry, in December 1883, prevented the Khedive from applying to His Sovereign, the Sultan of Turkey, for Military aid to relieve the garrisons in the Soudan; what are the occasions since January 1st 1884 on which Her Majesty's Ministers have "suggested to the Sultan that he should resume the direct administration of the Red Sea Littoral;" what conditions were appended to such suggestions; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have, since the fall of Khartoum, invited the Sultan to send relief to the garrison and people of Kassala?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: On the 12th of December, 1883, the Egyptian Government expressed a wish that Her Majesty's Government should negotiate with the Sultan the conditions under which the assistance of Turkish troops could be obtained in view of the state of affairs in the Soudan (Egypt, No. 1, 1884, p. 121), and on the following day Her Majesty's Government replied that they had no objection to the employment of Turkish troops if they were paid by the Turkish Government and employed exclusively for the Soudan. Her Majesty's Government were opposed to any operations except to secure the retreat of the garrisons (Egypt, No. 1, 1884, p. 131). In May last Her Majesty's Government proposed that the Sultan, as Sovereign of Egypt, should resume direct jurisdiction over the ports on the Egyptian Coast of the Red Sea, and should occupy them with his troops. Lord Granville has expressed his regret to Musurus Pasha that the Porte had not come to any decision on the subject. This proposal was made in the confidence that the Sultan would be ready to apply and observe, with regard to the territory so resumed, the provisions of the agreements between England and Turkey as to freedom of commerce, navigation, Customs, and the suppression of the Slave Trade. Her Majesty's Government have not invited the Sultan, since the fall of Khartoum, to send relief to Kassala.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked, whether the conditions imposed on the Sultan as to the Soudan and Egypt were that he should pay the expenses of the abandonment of the Soudan, and should be limited to entry to the Soudan solely by way of Suakin?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, if the hon. Member desired further information, it had been explained to him that the Papers relating to this subject were before the House.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the noble Lord had not fully answered his Question. He should put a Question on the subject to-morrow.

NATIONAL DEBT (CONVERSION OF STOCK) ACT, 1884.

MR. ALDERMAN COTTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will lay upon the Table a Return of the several Funds under his control, or that of any Department of the Government, which were converted, under the Act of 1884, from 3 per cent. to 2½ or 2¾ per cent. Stock, both as regards principal and interest, and the effect of the transaction on each particular Fund, so far as the trust for which it is held is concerned?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I have no objection to give the Return. I will lay it on the Table shortly.

PATENT MEDICINES ACT—LEGISLATION.

DR. CAMERON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he has yet received from the Board of Inland Revenue those Reports on the Medicine Stamp Tax, which in the House of Commons on August 7th he undertook to "study with care;" and, if so, what action he proposes taking in the matter?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I have considered the question of the Patent Medicines Act with the Board of Inland Revenue, and also with my noble Friend the President of the Council. We have under consideration a Bill or Bills deal-

ing with the subject; but I cannot say now what action will be taken during this Session.

NAVY—THE GREENWICH AGE PENSION

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether Her Majesty's Government will reconsider the question of the Greenwich Age Pension, so as to give it to pensioners who retired from the service before the order of 1878?

MR. CAINE: The question referred to by the hon. Gentleman is now under the consideration of a Committee, over which His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh presides.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIA AND AFGHANISTAN—THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the important letter from *The Times* Correspondent with Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission in Afghanistan, which appeared in that paper on the 3rd March, and especially to the following extracts:—

"I have pointed out the great strategical importance of Pul-i-Khatun, a place which has always been considered Afghan, and beyond the pale of discussion. Another important position is Penjdeh, in the valley of the Murghab. Its inhabitants have always been subject to Afghanistan, and it is occupied by an Afghan garrison. Russia does not desire the definition of the Afghan frontier, for it will put an end to her successful system of stealthy encroachment.

. . . Three years ago the nearest Russian outposts on the road from the Caspian were at Krasnovodsk and Chikishlar, 700 miles from Herat; now they are at Pul-i-Khatun, only 150 miles from Herat. Three years ago the nearest Russian outposts on the road from the Oxus and Merv were at Katta Kurghan, say 500 miles from Herat; now they are at Tokatan, 140 miles from Herat. Nearly all this progress has been made by unapproved encroachments since we evacuated Kandahar."

whether it is true that the Russian troops have occupied Zulfagar, 40 miles south of Pul-i-Khatun, Ak-Rabat, and Penjdeh, all four places being on Afghan territory; whether any further advance has been recently made beyond these places, where Sir Peter Lumsden's force now is stationed; and, whether he can now, consistently with the public interest, state that Her Majesty's Ministers intend to protect the absolute integrity of all Afghan territory, including these important positions, from Russian occupation and influence, in accordance with their own pledges and those of the Czar's Government? The hon. Member intimated that he would not press for an answer if the right hon. Gentleman should not consider it consistent with the interests of the Public Service to give one. The Question had been on the Paper for 10 days; but he was quite willing to wait until it could be conveniently answered.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, he will, perhaps, also reply to a communication made to him by myself, in which I stated that I also intended to put a Question of a general character on this subject—namely, whether the Government have any information which they can properly communicate to the House? And I am anxious to take this opportunity of disabusing the minds of some persons of the impression that Her Majesty's Government take unusual steps to communicate with the Opposition on this subject.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am glad to hear the words that have fallen from the right hon. Gentleman, because I think he was quite right to remove any misapprehension that may prevail on the subject, though the rumour of which he speaks did not happen to have reached me, and I was not cognizant of it. I thank the hon. Gentleman the Member for Eye also for his disposition to wait, pending the course of proceedings in this extremely important matter, until the time shall be ripe for an answer. There is nothing I could communicate to the House at the present moment which would substantially improve the hon. Member's information. All I would beg of the hon. Gentleman and the House is to accept my assurances that the subject has the constant and unfailing attention of Her Majesty's Government.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY—NOTICE OF MOTION SIR EDWARD J. REED.

SIR EDWARD J. REED asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the anxiety which is felt respecting the present state of the Navy, he will afford me facilities for making the Motion which stands in my name, and for taking the sense of the House upon it?

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to my hon. Friend, I may state that I

think he is under a misapprehension as to the Rules with respect to Motions made in this House in the nature of Votes of Censure. It is certainly the established practice of the House—and I hope it will continue to be the established practice—that when Notice of a Vote of Censure is given in the House by some person who is entitled to express the opinion of some very large portion of the House, and is responsible for making himself the organ of that opinion—in such cases, undoubtedly, it is the established practice to put aside the course of Business for the purpose of entertaining such a Vote of Censure. I do not in the least mean to say that these are the only Votes of Censure that ought to be moved; but I only mean to say that there is no justification for interfering with the course of Business when the Vote of Censure proceeds from an individual Member on his own responsibility. At the present moment I could not do anything—independently of what I have just stated—in derogation of the precedence that has been given to the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. But having thus far given an answer to my hon. Friend, I beg he will not suppose that I am desirous to see the discussion of his Motion postponed. I should be very glad to see it brought on speedily; and, by way of giving him some small assistance, I wish to refer him to the answer given the other day by my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron). When my hon. Friend behind me appealed to the hon. Member for Glasgow and requested him to give him precedence for his Motion, the hon. Member for Glasgow replied that probably my hon. Friend would be able to get precedence from me. Now, Sir, as I have had the opportunity of dispelling that idea on the part of the hon. Member for Glasgow, and as it is not in my power to give precedence to my hon. Friend, the hon. Member will now understand that the reason given for his refusal is entirely removed, and possibly he will now make way for my hon. Friend.

SIR EDWARD J. REED: Will the Prime Minister allow me to ask him another Question on this subject? The terms of my Motion are not in the form of a Vote of Censure on the Government, but only of a Vote of Censure on a Department of the Administration; and it seems to me that we have some claim to bring before the House the views which, after care and consideration, we hold on this subject. I should have thought — [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Hear, hear!"]—that the Admiralty itself would have been glad to have had this matter discussed. [*Renewed cries of* "Order!" *and* "Hear, hear!" I beg to give Notice that on Monday next I shall ask the Prime Minister whether he will be prepared to give me an evening after Easter?

THE WEST INDIA ISLANDS—RECIPROCITY TREATY WITH THE UNITED STATES.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the offers of the Government of the United States to negotiate a Convention with the West India Islands have been rejected by Her Majesty's Government; and, if he will lay upon the Table the Despatch from the Government of the United States offering to open negotiations for a reciprocity Treaty, and the Correspondence which has since taken place on the subject between the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office, the Board of Trade, and the interests concerned?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have not been able to accept the draft of the Convention proposed by the late United States Government; and Lord Granville is now in communication with Her Majesty's Minister at Washington with respect to the publication of the Diplomatic Correspondence. The question of the publication of the Papers referred to by my hon. Friend must stand over until the course to be taken with regard to the Correspondence with the United States is settled.

NEW GUINEA—OCCUPATION OF NORTHERN COAST BY GERMANY.

SIR WILLIAM M'ARTHUR asked the First of the Treasury, If the statement in *The Pall Mall Gazette* of Monday the 9th inst. is correct, viz.:—

"That Her Majesty's Government has surrendered Huon Bay in New Guinea to the German Government, and that the line of demarcation between England and Germany in New Guinea will be latitude 8 south of the equator?"

MR. GLADSTONE: The case stands thus:—There was a claim or desire on

the part of the German Government to annex the whole of what is known as the North and North-Eastern Coast of New Guinea. Of course, I do not speak of the portion that is subject to the Dutch. On the 2nd of this month Her Majesty's Government repeated an offer, which they had previously made on the 7th of February, to settle in a friendly manner with Germany the best point on the North-Eastern Coast for fixing the boundary between the German Protectorate and that portion of the Coast the Protectorate of which was assumed by England. The negotiations on this subject have commenced, and have advanced in a satisfactory manner; but they have not reached the stage at which a positive statement can be made as to the details or the particular point at which the boundary is to be fixed. The House may rest assured that the aim of Her Majesty's Government is to secure, in addition to the South Coast, which has already been appropriated in a certain sense, a fair division of the Northern Coast of New Guinea.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked, whether this was the way in which Her Majesty's Government showed their appreciation of the recent offers of the Australian Colonies to send troops to the Soudan; and whether Her Majesty's Government had not conceded to Germany the right of annexing parts of New Guinea which the Queensland Colony and the other Australian Colonies had desired to annex?

Mr. GLADSTONE asked for Notice.

INDIA—THE BENGAL TENANCY BILL.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India a Question of which he had given private Notice—Whether the telegraphic information in *The Times* of this morning was correct, that the Bengal Tenancy Bill had passed without much alteration from the state in which it left the Select Committee; and, whether 250 Zemindars came to Calcutta to petition the Viceroy for delay, and that the delay had been refused?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: The Bill has passed. After the discussion that took place on the Motion of the hon. Baronet the other night for the adjournment of the House, I sent the following telegram to the Viceroy:—

"Statement telegraphed by Durbhunga, made in Parliament that you are pressing through Rent Bill without giving time for translation into vernacular. Reason given that you wish to go to Simla. What shall I answer?"

I have received this morning a telegram, of which the following is an abstract:—

"From Viceroy, March 11, 1885.—Statement absolutely unfounded. Bill already twice translated into vernacular. Select Committee held 64 meetings. Of these 28 held in Calcutta within last few months. Maharajah attended only seven. Committee consisted of 11 Members, of whom only two go to Simla, and decided vernacular re-publication unnecessary, because almost all alterations were excisions favourable to Zemindars, and not new clauses. After Bill reported fortnight elapsed before considered by Legislative Council. First Motion in Council was for suspension by Zemindar Representative, which was lost by 18 to 2. Two Native Members, who do not go to Simla, had voted before Members of Executive Council were called on to vote. Members representing ryots' interests voted in majority. Bill passed to-day without division after seven days' debate."

I was not able to get the exact wording of the telegram which the hon. Baronet had quoted, as when I asked the hon. Baronet for it he had left it at home.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL explained that he was not asked for the telegram until after dinner, when he had changed his clothes and left the telegram at home.

SOUTH AFRICA—BECHUANALAND.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Secretary of State for War, If the Artillery stationed at Natal has been telegraphed for by Sir Charles Warren to proceed at once to Bechuanaland; and, if this is so, whether they will be landed at Port Alfred and sent by rail to Hope Town, as being a cheaper and shorter route, by over 400 miles, than going round by Cape Town?

The MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am not aware of any such request on the part of Sir Charles Warren.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—QUESTIONS—STATE OF THE NOTICE PAPER.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I wish to put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister which arises out of the extraordinary condition of the Notice Paper to-day. I find that there are Notices of 77 Questions upon it, and I

wish to know whether some arrangement may not be made by which Questions of merely local or personal interest should not be put verbally in the House, but printed, with the answers to them, on the Notice Paper, Mr. Speaker having authority to decide without appeal what Questions are or are not of this character?

MR. GLADSTONE: I can quite appreciate the intention with which the Question of the hon. Member has been put, and I think the suggestion he has made deserves consideration; but I do not think I can undertake to deal with the subject in answer to a Question.

Afterwards—

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said: In reference to the Question of the hon. Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), I wish to ask the Prime Minister if he is not prepared himself to move in the matter, and to get rid of this questioning evil; whether he will support a Motion for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider the Rules which relate to the putting of Questions in this House?

MR. GLADSTONE: I doubt whether that course could be followed with advantage at the present moment.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: In the event of the hon. Member for Hertford placing on the Paper a Notice in reference to the putting of Questions, relating to local and personal matters, in this House, I will ask the hon. Member whether, at the same time, he will not use his influence with Members of the Conservative Party to induce them to abstain from placing on the Paper delicate Questions affecting the Imperial policy in relation to foreign affairs at a moment when the issues of peace and war are trembling in the balance?

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)

MR. BOURKE said, some of the Supplementary Votes that were down for consideration that evening arose out of Egyptian finance; and he wished to know whether Her Majesty's Government could postpone those Votes until the Papers relating to Egyptian finance had been presented to Parliament?

MR. GLADSTONE: I should not like to make any further demands on the patience of the House; but, as the right hon. Gentleman knows, we must have our Supplementary Estimates completed before the 31st of March, and there is a chance that the Financial Agreement may not be signed by that date. At the earliest moment we can find after the conclusion of the Agreement it will be presented to Parliament. It would be impossible for us to discuss Egyptian finance without having the Agreement before us. We will not lose a moment in submitting the Agreement to Parliament.

MR. CHAPLIN said, that as they had been told very often by the Prime Minister that the Agreement would be signed in a short time, and as some weeks had passed since that announcement was first made, he wished to know what the right hon. Gentleman meant by a short time? Was it a few days, a week, a month, or two months? The House was very anxious to have that information.

MR. GLADSTONE said, they had been so often disappointed as to time in that matter—a burnt child dreaded the fire—that he did not like to speak too positively; but what appeared to be the reasonable expectation on the part of the Government was that the matter would be decided in the course of two or three days. It was only on account of some verbal questions that some delay had taken place at one or two Foreign Courts.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Could the right hon. Gentleman conveniently tell us in what form the question will be submitted to the House?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think that the form of the presentation of the question to Parliament will be one that will completely establish the jurisdiction of the House of Commons. It will be in the form of a preliminary Resolution on which to found a Bill for a guarantee.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE VOTE ON ACCOUNT.

MR. HEALY asked for an assurance from the Government that the Vote on Account would not be pressed forward that night, as it had been circulated only that morning?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, it was impossible to postpone the Vote on Account. The Monday and Thursday of next week must be devoted to the Army and Navy Estimates.

In reply to Mr. W. H. SMITH,

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, it was proposed to take the Supplemental Navy Estimates on Monday, and the Army Supplemental Estimates on Thursday.

MR. GORST said, that under that arrangement there would be only one night for the discussion of the Navy Estimates.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) replied, that it was necessary to take the first Vote in each branch next week.

PARLIAMENT—ORDER—AMENDMENTS ON THE MOTION FOR GOING INTO COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Mr. Speaker, I wish to submit a point of Order to you with regard to the proceedings of this evening. The first Order of the Day is for Supply, and it is intended, I believe, that the Supplementary Civil Service Estimates should be taken. Now, I find by Standing Order No. 425A, passed on the 27th of November, 1882, that—

"Whenever the Committee of Supply stands as the First Order of the Day on Monday or Thursday Mr Speaker shall leave the Chair without putting any Question, unless on first going into Supply on the Army, Navy, or Civil Service Estimates respectively, or on any Vote of Credit an Amendment be moved or Question raised relating to the Estimates proposed to be taken in Supply."

The point I wish, Sir, to submit to you is this—the Vote on Account which the Government propose to take to-night is for the Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates, 1885-6, and does not refer to the present financial year, but to the new financial year commencing on the 1st of April, 1885. Therefore, if the Government are to take this Vote on Account to-night and bring it on after you have left the Chair, and Committee of Supply has been begun on the Estimates for the current year, I want to know whether private Members will be deprived of the opportunity, which would otherwise be afforded to them, of moving an Amendment to the Motion that you leave the Chair on the first occasion of going into Committee of Supply on the Civil Service Estimates for the next financial year?

MR. SPEAKER: The opportunity for discussion, to which the hon. Member refers, will be given on the regular Civil Service Estimates of the year. That is a point which has already been settled by the Chair.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Are we, then, to understand that after the 1st of April, or on the next occasion, when the Civil Service Estimates for 1885-6 are down on the Paper for Committee of Supply, it will be open for any hon. Member to move an Amendment on the Motion that you leave the Chair?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes; that would be the case.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1884-5).

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

1. £23,400, Public Education, Ireland.

MR. SEXTON said, the sum now asked for by the Government on account of Public Education in Ireland was £23,400. He did not propose to call in question the amount of the Vote; but in looking into the details he found that £3,000 of the sum was to go towards the salaries of the principal and assistant teachers, and that a considerable portion of the remaining sum of £20,400 was for an increase in the payments for result fees to the Irish National school teachers. He need scarcely say that this was a Department in which he was glad to see an increased expenditure; and he was sure that the hon Members with whom he had the honour to act would always be glad to see a satisfactory increment in the result fees. It was also satisfactory to find that there had not only been a larger number of pupils presented for examination, but that the rate of payment to the teachers for each pupil had been increased. Therefore he had no desire to contest the amount of the Vote; but he desired to take this opportunity of warning the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who was responsible for this Department, that upon the consideration of the Vote on Account, or else upon the regular Estimates for the year, the Irish Members

would feel obliged to take a full view of the constitution and conduct of this important Department of the State in Ireland. In its constitution the Board of National Education in Ireland was, perhaps, the most objectionable of any Department connected with the Public Service. It was composed, with few exceptions, of men in official positions who approached their duties with an official bias, who had not sufficient time to devote to the duties of the Board, who enjoyed no share whatever of the public confidence, and who left the duties connected with the position to be discharged by a paid Commissioner, who had neither the confidence of the teachers, of the people, nor of the Irish Members in that House. He desired to ask the Chief Secretary, or the Secretary to the Treasury, what was the explanation of the course lately pursued by the Government towards gentlemen who held the position of Inspectors of the Board. He observed that these Inspectors recently met with a check from the Board of Commissioners, and a stinging rebuke from the Lord Lieutenant, for no better reason than that they had endeavoured to better their condition. Why should not Civil servants be allowed in Ireland the same freedom of representation and agitation to improve their lot as was allowed to Civil servants in England and Scotland? For these Inspectors the highest standard of education was required. They had to pass a difficult examination, and were called upon to discharge very onerous and difficult duties; and it was, therefore, with surprise and regret that he had noticed, in the attempt they had made to improve their condition, the check which the Board of Commissioners sitting in Marlborough Street had attempted to impose upon them. He could assure the Committee that if Sir Patrick Keenan in Marlborough Street, or Earl Spencer at Dublin Castle, took upon themselves to rebuke the School Inspectors for the only reason that they were desirous of getting better terms for themselves, the difficulties of the Irish Question would not be lessened, nor the discharge of duties by the public officials of Ireland rendered more easy or efficient. He certainly thought the policy pursued by the Board at Marlborough Street, in endeavouring to gag the National school teachers and to stifle their representations by terror, deserved the attention of Parliament. He had been present on the occasion when the course pursued by the teachers provoked the despotic action of the Commissioners, and had led to the issue of a Circular warning the National school teachers that if they admitted to their confidence persons outside their own body, so dangerous as Members of Parliament, and allowed them to be present at their conferences, the teachers themselves would be held individually and collectively responsible for the language used. He had never heard of any attempt to make English Civil servants responsible for the language used by Members of Parliament at any of their meetings; but the teachers in the National schools in Ireland were told, in the most arbitrary and tyrannical manner, that they must be prepared to lose their miserable situations or discountenance the attendance of Members of Parliament at their meetings and disavow their utterances. Last year his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) and himself happened to attend a public congress of the teachers, and afterwards a public dinner in the City of Dublin. He was aware that the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan and himself did not always use the kind of language which was acceptable to Her Majesty's Government. On that occasion the teachers drank the health of Her Majesty the Queen, but they did not drink the health of Earl Spencer, nor were they any more called upon to drink the health of Earl Spencer than that of the insubordinate usher who had been recently distinguishing himself in Dublin Castle. The teachers thought that to drink the health of Her Majesty the Queen was enough; and although the omission of the health of the Lord Lieutenant was not owing to any action of his hon. and learned Friend or himself, he confessed that if the health of Earl Spencer had been drunk by the teachers, both his hon. and learned Friend and himself would have been obliged to leave the hall. In consequence of the teachers having limited themselves in their loyalty to drinking the health of the Queen a Circular of the most despotic and cowardly character was issued, which would have the effect of bringing the influence of terror to bear upon the proceedings of the teachers. He wished to ask whether or not the

teachers were to be allowed to communicate freely with their Parliamentary friends, and to hear their addresses when in public meeting assembled, without being threatened with the severe penalty of dismissal at the hands of the Commissioners? He wished also to refer to the conditions under which teachers were examined for promotion. The only communication made to the teacher by the Commissioners was the result of the examination; and that communication was made, not to the teacher himself, but to the manager. It was a simple intimation that the teacher had failed to pass the examination, and was not to be promoted on account of his answers to the questions put to him not having displayed sufficient merit. This was the vague and general communication made to the manager; and the Commissioners thus enjoyed the power of depriving the teacher of promotion, and rendering the results of his examination nugatory, upon no rule of reason or conceivable maxim of fair play. Many of the teachers who went up for examination with a view to promotion wished to know, for their own guidance, how they stood in relation to the subjects upon which they were examined—in how many they had passed, and in what they had failed. This information was certainly most essential for their future guidance, in the event of their desiring to present themselves for future examination. How was it possible that a man would ever be able to pass if he was not informed as to the particular subjects in which the examination had shown him to be defective? It was an act of unreasonable and wanton despotism to refuse to give him this information except through the manager. In a case which had been brought under his Mr Sexton's notice the teacher who went up for examination received nearly all the marks which would have entitled him to pass; the examination was very close indeed; but although he passed in 55 per cent of the subjects, the simple intimation he received from the Commissioners was that his answers were not of sufficient merit to entitle him to promotion. Although he was only an infinitesimal percentage under that which would have enabled him to pass, for all he knew from the Commissioners he might have failed to answer satisfactorily even 10 per cent of the questions. The rules adopted were absurd and ridiculous, and by the course pursued the Commissioners placed the most able teachers on a level with the most ignorant and stupid dullard in the whole Service. He contended that the teacher should be supplied with information as to the marks which he had received in every branch. This would be a means of enabling the teacher to qualify himself for the next trial. No intellectual teacher who presented himself for examination ought to be subjected to the ill opinion which would be engendered in the mind of the manager against him by a simple communication that he had failed. There was no rule of the Service which required a teacher to present himself for examination. And as he did so, simply as a volunteer, he was entitled to have the result of the examination supplied to him directly and confidentially. [Mr. Campbell-Bannerman dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary made a gesture of dissent. Would the right Gentleman answer this plain question. How was the teacher, in the event of desiring to go up for a further examination, to qualify himself for success, if the examiners refused to tell him in what particular branches he had failed? That was a plain question, and he desired a plain answer. In all other examinations the result was communicated to the candidate. He should certainly press the right hon. Gentleman for a reply to this question, and he should ask for the withdrawal of the rule which now operated so injuriously upon candidates for promotion. He might, in conclusion, say that the time was approaching fast when the Irish Party would invite the attention of the House to the consideration of the whole subject, and endeavour to effect a thorough and radical remodelling of this Department, which was the most meddlesome and the most despotic in Ireland.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he was accustomed to the use of strong language, and also to the statement of cases by what he did not wish to characterize more strongly than terms of exaggeration. If, however, the state of things in this case was as represented by the hon Member—namely, that when a candidate went in for a voluntary examination in a number of subjects and did not pass, he certainly thought he was entitled, if he desired, to know the

number of subjects in which he had passed, and the number of marks he had obtained. That he believed to be a very fair and reasonable request. He could not agree, however, with the hon. Member that the candidate was entitled to have that information directly without the knowledge of his manager; because he believed that the manager was perfectly entitled to know what was the nature of the examination, and in what manner the candidate had acquitted himself.

Mr. SEXTON remarked, that that was not his contention. Let the managers know if they would; but let the teacher be informed of the number of marks he received in each subject.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, this was a mere matter of form. It was only reasonable that a teacher who wished to know how he had gone through an examination should receive the information; but it was necessary that he should apply to the manager, and that the information should go through the manager. That, he understood, was what actually took place now. The hon. Member had asked a good many questions in reference to the teachers, and had varied them with great ingenuity; but in spite of this ingenuity, and all the ingenuity which he could exercise, in his inquiries as to the Commissioners of the Board in Dublin, he could not find out that there was any reason for saying that a teacher was debarred from ascertaining the result of his examination. If it were so, he certainly would say that he would at once look into the matter with a strong disposition to apply a remedy; but he could not conceive that anything of that kind occurred. He differed from the hon. Member in the opinion that there should be direct communication with the teacher behind the back of the manager of the school. The hon. Member talked of the rules laid down by the Commissioners as being the exercise of unreasonable despotism; but so far as he was able to judge of the proceedings of the Board there was nothing arbitrary, harsh, or despotic in them at all. He did not understand the hon. Member to make a grievance of the case he had referred to, in which, owing to some infinitesimal percentage below the necessary standard, one particular teacher had failed to pass. With regard to the Circular to which the hon. Member had called attention, that was, no doubt, a very delicate subject; and he might say at once that he was not disposed to think that the issue of Circulars from the Education Department interfering with the discretion of the teachers in matters such as that to which this Circular had reference was very desirable. In his opinion, such things as those had better be left to the good taste and feeling of the teachers themselves; but, at the same time, he did think that in a country like Ireland, where political feeling ran so high, it was peculiarly undesirable that the teachers, who had under their charge the children of parents of all classes and denominations, should take a prominent and public character as violent partizans either on one side or the other. As he understood the matter, the Circular was issued simply with the desire to prevent the teachers assuming such an attitude in regard to politics as might have a tendency to do harm to the cause of education, a result which was not unlikely to follow if they were found associating themselves with the views of a particular Party, and thus causing a feeling of discontent. There was, he felt sure, no intention to prohibit the teachers from carrying out in the ordinary way their own views on political matters; but he thought the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) would agree with him that it was not a desirable thing, *à priori*, that a person in the position of a teacher should publicly identify himself with Party politics. Although the object of the Circular had been what he had just stated, he would not say whether it was the most judicious way of effecting that object; but it was certainly not issued with a desire to prevent the legitimate exercise of the teachers' rights as citizens. The hon. Gentleman had spoken of the claims raised by the School Inspectors for additional pay, and in reply to the contention of the hon. Member he had to say that there was no objection to the servants of the Education Department putting forward a statement of their case, although there was a strong objection to the creation of an organized agitation in any Department, and it was in consequence of such an organization being undertaken by that class of *employés* under the Education Board that

the step had been taken of which the hon. Gentleman complained. With regard to the Vote itself, he felt quite sure that the Committee generally, and the hon. Member himself, would agree with him that it indicated an exceedingly satisfactory state of things. It was considered that under the circumstances a very liberal estimate was made at this time last year as to the amount that would be required in Ireland, and it had turned out that that estimate had been more than justified. He was glad to say that there had been a far better attendance of the children in the schools, and that there was also evidence of increased prosperity in the country. The result was very satisfactory, especially as it added to the emoluments of that very hard-worked and deserving class of public servants, the school teachers of Ireland.

COLONEL COLTHURST desired to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant if he could inform the Committee whether there was any prospect of dealing with the question of education in Ireland by means of a Government measure this Session? There could be no doubt that the teachers in Ireland did not get their due proportion of emolument, owing partly to the irregular attendance of the children, and partly to the failure of so many Unions—indeed, he might say, of almost all the Unions, to make the contributions which he, for one, thought they were bound in honesty and in honour to pay. Still, there was the fact that they did not do so, and the consequence was that the teachers, through no fault of their own, were mulct of a portion of the remuneration to which they were undoubtedly entitled, and which they ought to receive. He hoped his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary would be enabled to hold out some hope that the measure, which he had every reason to believe had been drafted, and which was intended to deal with various pressing points in connection with the subject of Irish education, would be brought forward during the present Session, and that it would not, as was the case last year, be postponed in favour of some Sunday Closing Bill, or other measure, of not nearly so much importance. With regard to what had fallen from the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) with respect to the composition of the National Board of Education, he felt quite sure that no one who might be called upon to constitute such a body on any future occasion would constitute it exactly as it was now. Still, that Board had had to deal for a number of years with the question of National Education; and it had, upon the whole, achieved a considerable amount of success, owing mainly to the action of Sir Alexander Macdonald and Sir Patrick Keenan, both of whom he believed possessed the confidence of the clergy and teachers generally throughout the country. He believed that although every individual act of theirs might not have commanded general approval, still they all interested in Education owed them a deep debt of gratitude.

MR. HEALY said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had stated that he was accustomed to the violent language of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton); and in answer to that remark he (Mr. Healy) could only say that they on those Benches were accustomed to the fogginess of the replies of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman had made, as far as he (Mr. Healy) could understand him, no defence as to the allegation of his hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton), that the marks obtained by the teachers at the different examinations were not made known, and he had not stated that he would insist in future that they should be given. The reason was that the right hon. Gentleman dared not assume any independence in that House, either on this or on any other subject in connection with Ireland, the fact being that he had no more independence than the Mace at the Table; and on any question with reference to Irish education he would have to refer to Sir Patrick Keenan as to whether that gentleman thought this or that course desirable. If Sir Patrick Keenan said he thought such a course ought to be taken, the answer given was his, and not that of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. He would inform the right hon. Gentleman, if he were not already aware of the fact, that in every other class of examination the marks obtained by the candidate were given. They were given in the case of all students in other public examinations; and even in the case of the cadets of the Royal

Irish Constabulary the number of marks gained at an examination was made known. In England the number of marks in every examination was published, both in the case of the successful and unsuccessful candidates; but for the purpose of putting a stumbling block in the way of the Irish National teachers this small amount of information was refused, and the result was that the candidates were put to the unnecessary trouble of grinding up in the whole of the 13 subjects over and over again for want of knowing the particular elements in which they had failed. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary of a question he had put in connection with this subject on the 20th of June, 1884. He would read the Question and answer as reported in *Hansard's Debates*, vol. 289, page 991. He had asked—

"Whether it is a fact that the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland conceal from the public the names of the examiners appointed by them to conduct the annual examination of teachers; whether, as a consequence, questions, or perhaps whole pages of questions, have frequently been given, outside the prescribed course, on the teachers' programme; whether the Commissioners of National Education will for the future, like the Universities, South Kensington Department, and the Intermediate Education Board, place upon each set of questions the name of the examiner on that subject; and, whether the names of the examiners appointed to conduct the next July examinations will be given; and, if not, would he explain the reason?"

To this the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) replied—

"The Commissioners of National Education inform me that there is no concealment whatever in the matter, and that it would be impossible to put the names of the examiners on the examination paper, as their preparation, as well as the examination of the candidates' answers, is a joint work, and not done exclusively by individuals. The Commissioners have furnished me with a memorandum of the system of examination adopted, which seems both efficient and fair. I should be glad to show it to any hon. Member who wishes to see it."

He (Mr. Healy) asked—"Will it be laid on the Table?" and the right hon. Gentleman replied—"I have no objection to that." And, of course, it was never laid on the Table, as far as he (Mr. Healy) was aware; and he might state that he had examined the Papers which had been presented in 1884-5, with the assistance of the Librarian, and could not ascertain that the promise made by the right hon. Gentleman had ever been complied with. He certainly thought that this was a matter on which even an Irish Chief Secretary might be supposed to have an opinion of his own, and in regard to which he might act without the aid of Sir Patrick Keenan, especially when he found that both in the Royal Irish Constabulary, and in England, in the case of all examinations for the Universities, for the Bar, and in other cases, the custom was that the number of marks should be published. Surely this ought to be sufficient for the Chief Secretary, if he really were a man of any independence, and he ought to be able to say that what was done elsewhere should be done also in Ireland. It certainly seemed to him that this, at least, was a matter in which the right hon. Gentleman might exercise a little personal judgment, without thinking it necessary to refer it to Sir Patrick Keenan. With regard to the Circular that had been issued to the teachers in Ireland by the Board of Education, there could be little doubt that it was intended to prohibit those men from attending National meetings, or from indulging themselves in any way with matters of a political character. The right hon. Gentleman had explained that its object was to prevent the teachers from taking an over-prominent part in politics; but he had not explained to the Committee that by the terms of that Circular the teachers were held directly responsible for any proceedings that might take place at meetings attended by them. The Circular was issued last August, and in it the teachers were informed that they would be held individually and collectively responsible for the opinions of any person who happened to address them. This was practically the substance of it; and if any hon. Gentleman opposite could refine upon the words used in the Circular he would give him the benefit of any distinction he might be able to draw. There could be little doubt, however, as to what was the real meaning and intention of the Circular. In his opinion, that Circular was distinctly drawn up to prevent any Representative of the National Party from attending the meetings of the National teachers. It might be said, and of course it would be said, that this was not the case; but he asked the Committee to consider what were the facts? The

Circular was issued immediately after the National teachers had been addressed by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton and himself (Mr. Healy). At the dinner of that body they ventured to make remarks, some of which had reference to Sir Patrick Keenan. These speeches were reported, and immediately after the report had appeared this Circular was issued. What, he asked, was the effect of that Circular? It was evidently intended to debar the National teachers of Ireland from receiving any aid and assistance from the National Party. In it they were practically told that if their Representatives happened to use any language which Sir Patrick Keenan and Co. considered ought not to be used, or might think unjustifiable, unless the teachers present immediately got up and dissociated themselves from those who used that language, they would be held responsible for it. This was really not intended as a muzzle upon the teachers; it was rather a muzzle which the Government desired to put upon the Representatives of the National Party under the impression that they would not jeopardize the interests of the teachers by using language that might get them into a scrape. For his own part, he Mr. Healy need hardly say that, although the Speaker might put the *colliare* on him in that House, Sir Patrick Keenan should never subject him to such a process. He had, however, yet to learn that the Government of Ireland would ever dare to call any teacher over the coals for not dissociating himself from any remarks he (Mr. Healy) might make. He extremely regretted his inability to attend the last meeting of the teachers in Ireland, his absence being due to his being in Glasgow. Had he been present, he should have made comments on the question in general, and Sir Patrick Keenan in particular, as would, he thought, have set the whole body of teachers in Ireland in revolt against that Board. As the matter now stood, either the obnoxious Circular must be withdrawn or discredited, or the National teachers, as a body, must be induced to set themselves against it. He repeated that the Government dared not carry out the threat the Circular contained. Even as bad a Government as the Irish Government would not care in such a matter to put themselves so grievously in the wrong as to hold 16,000 educated men and women responsible for the language of the independent Representatives of the Irish people. For his own part, he cared about as much for the Government or Sir Patrick Keenan as he did for the Tycoon of Japan. With regard to another matter, he must take exception to the Circular issued by the National Board to the Inspectors of Schools, censuring them for seeking to improve their position by approaching the Government without the intervention of the Board. This was a proceeding which seemed to him to savour very much of bureaucratic tyranny. He must say that he could see no reason why the Inspectors of National Schools should be debarred, any more than Civil servants generally were, from seeking the aid and influence of Members of Parliament to help in redressing their grievances. As a matter of fact, there was no other body of men to whom they could look for redress. They had for years been pressing their case upon the School Department in Marlborough Street, and no attention had been paid to them; and he thought that to attempt to divorce these gentlemen from their Representatives now was nothing less than an act of the most high-handed character. [The hon. Gentleman here quoted from that part of the Circular addressed by the Education Department to the School Inspectors, expressing regret at the action they had taken.] The statement here made was a very vague one; and he should like to know what it was that the Government complained of in the conduct of the Inspectors of Schools? These gentlemen surely had as much right and title to endeavour, by any means in their power, to better their position, as had any other class of men; and he should like to know what was the construction the Government placed upon these rules? His experience was that the Government drew up very careful Minutes and instructions, which were so framed that they could put upon them any interpretation they thought proper. When the rules appeared to be most liberal, they interpreted them in the narrowest spirit; and when they were narrowly framed, they gave them the widest and most liberal interpretation as against the individuals with whom they dealt. Almost

every incident was construed by some latitudinarian interpretation of the rules to be an act against the rules themselves. A rule might bear a very innocent look; but it would be found that the interpretation placed upon it by the Government was generally of such a character as to make it a tyrannical and arbitrary regulation. He would ask the Government when did they intend to bring in the Bill of which the House had heard for a considerable time, but which had hitherto been kept in the background? With regard to the Estimate before the Committee, it was one against which he had nothing to say, and which he thought the Committee would be very glad to vote. It was satisfactory, inasmuch as it provided for increased payments by results to the body of the Irish teachers. He was extremely glad that they had been able to deserve this, and to recognize the fact that the Government had introduced this Vote. It was but a few days ago that they had heard that the Government had a scheme for generally improving the position of teachers in Ireland, and they had promised to bring forward a Bill on the subject. Promises in regard to this had for some time been made by Sir Patrick Keenan; but up to the present moment they had nothing but vague hints on the matter. He supposed the Government intended, as usual, to try and put the Irish Representatives in a corner by the well-known device of promising a scheme for an improvement in the pay and pensions of the teachers, and perhaps in regard to their residences and some other matters, and that they meant to embody in the same measure other proposals that would not be acceptable. Considerable anxiety was felt on this subject, and the Bill ought to be introduced at the earliest possible moment, so that the Irish Representatives might know what it was the Government really intended to do. There was another matter also which the Government could not avoid discussing, and that was the Circular or Minute which had been drawn by Sir Patrick Keenan, a gentleman who appeared to favour the retention of the Maltese dialect in Malta. This Circular had reference to the education in Gaelic of Gaelic-speaking children; but this was a matter which he (Mr. Healy) should have something to say about at a later period, when he should take occasion to comment on the manner in which Sir Patrick Keenan was posturing in Malta as the patron of the Maltese dialect, while, apparently for professional purposes, he was doing everything he could in Ireland to extinguish the native language of the Irish people. Sir Patrick Keenan's apparent love of the Maltese dialect would seem to be due to the fact that there was a *patois* spoken in Malta which the English Government were anxious to favour at the expense of the Italian language, which most of the Maltese people preferred to the *patois* the English Government were trying to force upon them.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, the Bill about which questions had been put to him, and of which he had given Notice, would appear on the Paper for next Monday, when he should move for leave to introduce the measure if the Motion could be reached before too late an hour. He did not know, however, whether that would be the case as the Navy Estimates, had to be taken that evening, and would probably last until late; and if that were so, he should hold the Motion over until Tuesday.

COLONEL NOLAN expressed a hope that when the Bill that had been proposed by the right hon. Gentleman on behalf of the Government was introduced, it would be found to be one in which whatever benefits it might propose to confer would not be wrapped up with conditions which would destroy their value. He hoped that care would be taken to prevent children being compelled to attend schools where the religion taught was contrary to that held by their parents. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor for the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) had last year intimated, when the question was brought before the House, that he thought the power of obtaining sites for schools in Ireland was needed; and he further declared that probably sites for teachers' residences might in some cases be required. Although he made no distinct promise on the latter point, he had, however, spoken very strongly as to the necessity of sites for schools in certain parts of Ireland, particularly in the North. He hoped the Chief Secretary would be able to tell them that the Bill he had promised would deal with this subject. He (Colonel Nolan) had se-

cured a day—next Tuesday week—for discussing this question.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and gallant Member seems to be discussing the provisions of a Bill of which Notice has been given, but which is not at present before the Committee. It is not, therefore, in Order for the hon. and gallant Gentleman to discuss that matter in connection with the present Estimates.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he would not, after the intimation he had received from the Chair, make further reference to the Bill. He might have put it in a rather more roundabout shape, which, however, would have come to the same thing. He might have congratulated the Chief Secretary on the fact that another £20,000 was to be given to the teachers in Ireland, and have pointed out that this was a fact reflected great credit on the teachers who had earned the money, but that, although the sum was considerable, it was quite inadequate to the wants of the teachers. And then he might have pointed out that, inasmuch as the teachers were in receipt of inadequate salaries, they could not afford to pay for improved residences.

MR. JUSTIN MCCARTHY said, he did not think that anything could show more clearly the contrast between the way in which the people were treated in England and in Ireland than the facts which had been brought out in the course of the debate. If an Irish teacher or Inspector were to find fault with the Government, or if he happened to be present at a meeting at which an Irish Member of Parliament, who might be totally unknown to him, found fault with the Government, he would be held responsible for the utterances of that Member, and be liable to dismissal. Now, in this country there was a very eminent gentleman, famous in the world of letters—Mr. Matthew Arnold, who held the office of Inspector of Schools. Mr. Matthew Arnold, writing in *The Nineteenth Century*, and speaking of certain trials in Ireland, said that the government of Ireland, and especially the Castle system in the Metropolis of Ireland, was not only unnatural, but antinatural. When an English Inspector made such a statement, no one ventured to rebuke him; but if an Irish National school teacher happened merely to listen to anything of the kind he became liable to censure from the authorities, and even to dismissal. He did not think there could be a more curious illustration of the difference between the treatment of people in this country and in Ireland. He was glad that something was now being done to improve the condition of the Irish National school teachers. He hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would introduce his Bill as soon as possible, and that when it was brought in it might be printed and circulated at once, so that the public might have an opportunity of forming an opinion upon it. He could assure the Government that they would not be content with any half-hearted measure.

MR. PICTON said, he had no intention of occupying the time of the Committee; but he wished to express a word of sympathy with the Irish teachers. Hon. Members opposite had spoken of the threatening Circular which had been addressed to the teachers by the Board of Commissioners. Now, they all agreed with what the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had stated as to the undesirability of elementary teachers, or any other school teachers, mixing Party politics up with the lessons it was their duty to give; but when a difficulty arose on that score, surely a kindly and polite intimation might have been addressed to the school managers, who would have known how to deal with the matter. A Circular, such as that which had been issued by the Department in Dublin, was only calculated to create irritation in the minds of the teachers, and to produce opposite results from those which were desired. He could only say that if the teachers of Ireland were treated in that way, it afforded a very marked contrast indeed to the enormous amount of liberty and latitude accorded to hon. Members from Ireland in that House.

MR. MOLLOY wished to know if he understood the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary rightly that the marks obtained by the teachers were communicated to them through the manager?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Yes. The answer of the right hon. Gentleman afforded another example of the extraordinary replies received in that House by Irish Members who were interested in Irish affairs. As a matter of fact, nothing of the kind took place. He had it on the best authority that what took

place was this. A school teacher went up for examination, and after the lapse of a certain time a communication was made to his manager to the effect that he had not passed his examination; but that was the total amount of information afforded. The point raised by his hon. Friends was, whether or not a teacher was entitled to such information as would enable him to know what were the subjects in which he had or had not passed. That was the information for which his hon. Friends asked; and it was certainly most desirable that every teacher should know how it was he had failed. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that, in his opinion, the school teacher was entitled to certain information; and would the right hon. Gentleman, as Chief Secretary, undertake that in future he got that information. If not, and it was a mere question of referring backwards and forwards to different Departments in Ireland, he, for one, was unable to see what the use of a Chief Secretary in that House was. They might just as well communicate, by means of an ordinary penny postage-stamp, with Dublin. He (Mr. Molloy) would not say that this grievance existed; but if it did exist, it ought to be remedied; and he asked the right hon. Gentleman if he would undertake that it should be remedied?

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, that he had answered various questions upon the subject during the last half-hour. What he had stated was that he quite agreed that the fullest information should be given in regard to the details of the examination, which was usually afforded in all such examinations. At the same time, he thought that it ought to be given through the managers, and not to the teachers direct. The claim was that there should be a direct communication between the teachers and the examiners upon the subject. [Mr. Sexton: No.] All the hon. Member could insist upon, and he thought it was quite fair, was that the communication should be made through the manager. He was not intimately acquainted with the rules which applied to other competitive examinations; but he believed that in regard to many of them the details given were very limited indeed. He was distinctly of opinion, however, that all the information usually given in such examinations should be afforded to candidates from among the school teachers through the managers of the schools with which they were connected.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he did not think that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had made himself very clear. For his part, although he had listened very attentively to the discussion since it commenced, he confessed that he was still in a state of uncertainty whether the right hon. Gentleman had given any undertaking that he would see that the complaint of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was remedied, and that this objectionable practice should be no longer allowed to prevail in Dublin. It would appear from the last few remarks of the right hon. Gentleman that he thought the information upon the subjects in which the teachers had failed to pass should be given to the school managers. [Mr. Campbell-Bannerman: No.] He (Mr. William Redmond) had certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he was making an application for knowledge, as to the subjects on which the school teacher had not satisfied the requirements of the examination by the managers, the condition on which the information was conveyed to the school teacher himself.

Mr. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN: No; I only stated that the information would not go direct, but would be conveyed to the teacher through the manager.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he had understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that the information would only be given in case the manager applied for it; whereas, in many cases, the manager would have no personal interest in making the inquiry, although in all cases the teacher would be very much interested in obtaining the information. He thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to say plainly, "yes" or "no," whether he would give the information that was required to be given to the teacher on the teacher applying for it. That was what the Irish Members wanted to know; and to that question he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had, as yet, given a distinct answer, nor did he expect that they would succeed in getting a definite answer either. There was another point in reference to this matter which he

should like to emphasize, and it was the insult which had been put upon the Irish National Members by the Circular issued by the Commissioners to the school teachers. He believed that before there was an Irish National Party in that House the school teachers often got the advice of the Irish Members, and constantly consulted with them as to the manner in which it would be best to forward their interests. Nor did he know that the Government had ever interfered with such consultations between the school teachers and the Irish Members. And why was that? It was because, at that time, the Irish Members, unfortunately for Ireland, were either all Whigs or all Tories. Things had very much changed since; and now the action of the Commissioners, who issued the Circular, amounted to this—that the school teachers were to understand that as long as they only consulted, in regard to their interests, with Whig or Tory Irish Members no fault would be found with them; but directly they showed a disposition to put their claims and their interests in the hands of the Irish National Party the Government would come down upon them at once and say—"No; that must not be done." The Bishops of Ireland had considered that it was appropriate they should place the question of education in the hands of the Irish National Members; and in view of that action on the part of the Bishops he wanted to know why the Government should commit an act of gross insult to the Irish Members by issuing a Circular practically forbidding the Irish school teachers from consulting with them? He thought the conduct of the Government ought not to be allowed to pass without a strong protest. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had just entered the House, and he would ask him if he thought it was proper conduct on the part of the Commissioners to issue a Circular to the school teachers stating that they should not consult with the Irish Members of Parliament with reference to their interests? If they were not to consult with the Irish Members of Parliament, with whom were they to consult? Were they to consult with the English and Scotch Members? He was afraid, if they did, they would obtain very little satisfactory result from the consultation. If they were not to consult with the Irish Members, were they to go upon their knees to Earl Spencer, and his surroundings in Dublin Castle, and implore them to look into their case? It was simply infamous that such a body as the National school teachers of Ireland should be ordered by the Government not to hold communication with the Irish Members of Parliament. It was difficult to conceive how the Government could possibly consent to the issue of such a Circular. There was only one explanation to be given, and it was the same explanation that was given in regard to almost every act of the Irish Government—namely, that through the school teachers, and through every other channel, the primary wish of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and the Government generally in Ireland was to do everything in their power to weaken the hands of the Irish Party, led by his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), and to shake the confidence of the Irish people in that Party. He thought the Committee was entitled to know from the Chief Secretary why Her Majesty's Government had thought fit to prohibit the Irish National school teachers from soliciting the interference and support of the Irish Members in their case. He did not see of what use an Irish Member was, at all, to the people of the country he represented if they could not confide their interests to his hands for explanation in that House. It appeared to him to be the most natural thing in the world to expect that the school teachers, if they had a grievance—and Her Majesty's Government admitted that they had—to make that grievance known to Parliament through their elected Members. What they were told by the Government was that the school teachers must not make use of their elected Representatives at all. Did the Government require that the National school teachers should burn down houses, or shoot some landlord, or do some other desperate act before they could insure attention being paid to their wrongs? Did they wish to drive them into illegal courses, and, if not, why did they prohibit their making use of the Irish Members of Parliament unless the real reason was their desire to weaken the hands of the Irish Party? When the long-promised Bill was introduced, as it would be soon, the National school

teachers would recognize that they owed it to the Irish Members generally in spite of the Circular issued by the Government prohibiting the Irish teachers from consulting with their Representatives. He thought that if hon. Members on the other side of the House, and especially below the Gangway, had the spirit which ought to exist in them, they would strongly protest against the action of the Government in directing the school teachers not to consult with their Members. Such an act was a gross infringement of the rights of the school teachers, and a gross insult to the Representatives of the people. Why should not the Irish Members do everything they could for the National school teachers? Why should they not communicate with them and give expression to their grievances on the floor of that House? There was no reason whatever for the prohibition, and there could be no explanation except that it was a deliberate attempt on the part of the Government to discredit the Irish Members, and weaken the confidence of the Irish people in them. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to put an end to the difficulty, both in the House and in the country outside, by declaring distinctly what objections there could be to a consultation between the National school teachers and their Representatives, as to grievances. It was a simple question, and he thought he had a right to expect an answer to it.

An hon. MEMBER: The right hon. Gentleman will not answer.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: No; the right hon. Gentleman never answers anything.

MR. P. J. POWER desired to point out that the Poor Law Guardians of Ireland, as a body, were in favour of education; but they could not expect the Boards of Guardians to contribute largely out of the rates in order to assist the work of education so long as it was in the hands of a class of which they disapproved, and so long as the Irish people had no control over the system of education. He was satisfied that if Parliament would establish any system of education in Ireland that would be truly National, the different Unions would be delighted to become contributors to it; but so long as they had a Board which was in every sense anti-National they could not expect the Irish people to stultify themselves by approving of a system which they, as Irishmen, most strongly condemned. He would also point out to the Committee, in connection with this subject, that, as in many other instances, the information derived from Dublin Castle was altogether unreliable. Two years ago the Union which he had the honour to preside over was foolish enough to become a contributor to the educational expenses. They were told that if they became contributors the contributions they would be called upon to make would be about £255. With that understanding, the Union unfortunately consented to become a contributor, and then they received an order from the officials in Dublin Castle directing them to pay £500, or double the sum they were first told would be required from them. He wished to call attention to that fact as an example of the unreliability of the information which was received from Dublin Castle. If the Government would make the system truly National the Guardians would be found ready to support them.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN said, they very often in that House heard allusions made to Dublin Castle; but he presumed that as long as they had a Government there must be some centre from which that Government should act. Let it be called the "National Port" if they liked, and he would not differ from hon. Members as to the propriety of the nomenclature. He did not suppose, as sensible men, that they could comprehend the existence of a Government without some central place from which such Government would have to express its opinions and issue its instructions. The hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond), who had spoken with his usual animation and ability, had stated that the Government carried on the work of education in Ireland from Dublin Castle. The hon. Member was altogether in error in speaking of the National Board as a Government, seeing that it was simply a Department. He Sir Patrick O'Brien had been for years a Member of that House, and it had not been upon one occasion, but upon hundreds, that he had had communication with those hard-worked officials—the National school teachers. They were persons to whom the country owed a deep debt of gratitude; and, whoever was responsible for the recent arrangements, it was quite certain that an

opportunity should be afforded to the school teachers for making their grievances known. He had never grudged the sums paid out of the public funds for educational purposes in Ireland. He believed they made many of their own grievances, and added many grievances unnecessarily to those which really existed. But the one point which it was desirable to keep in the foreground was how the people of Ireland were to be taught, and trained, and brought up in knowledge, not only literary, but moral. Hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed to think that he ought to go a good deal further, and to use the word "National"—a word often heard in debates in that House. If he had the acute and logical intellect of the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy), he was quite sure, if he could have the advantage of a conversation with the hon. and learned Member on the subject, so that he could derive from the hon. and learned Member the instruction which the hon. and learned Member was so well able to impart; if he could have that advantage, he would, no doubt, be told that a great deal in the use of the word "National" depended upon its definition. Assuming that to be correct, was he wrong in saying that the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond) was begging the whole question. The meaning of the word "National" was this. It was generally associated with attempts on the part of a people who had been struggling under penal laws, persecution, and confiscation to make themselves free, their progenitors having been engaged in a similar undertaking before them. [*A laugh.*] This was no laughing matter. Of course, the modern Plutarch who wrote for *The Freeman's Journal*, and who said that he (Sir Patrick O'Brien) was generally unintelligible—of course a modern Plutarch—might be say a £10 Plutarch—was far superior to the Greek Plutarch, and was bound to be correct.

MR WILLIAM REDMOND rose to Order. He wished to know whether the hon. Baronet, whose speech, no doubt, was most interesting, was in Order in bringing Plutarch into the debate?

COLONEL NOLAN: Plutarch was an educational authority.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Baronet should address himself more directly to the Question before the Committee.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN said, he knew that it was the desire of the Chairman to prevent any difference in that House, and there was no one more indisposed than he was, in the few observations that he proposed to make, to produce such a state of circumstances. If, for a moment, humble animal that he was, he were to take up the position of a lion, he would say that his jackal in that House would be the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond), for the hon. Member always rose to a question of Order on every occasion when he (Sir Patrick O'Brien) ventured to address the House. The hon. Member was a philosopher by his manner, style, and mode of address.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I must remind the hon. Baronet again that the subject now before the Committee is a Supplementary Vote of £23,400 for Education in Ireland.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN said, he knew from experience that it was the Chairman's sense of fairness that induced him to treat him (Sir Patrick O'Brien) differently from hon. Members opposite, because he agreed with the hon. Gentleman in politics; but as they were talking on this question he had no desire to shrink from it. One word as to the question of the National school teachers. It had always been his opinion, during the long time he had sat in the House, that the teachers verbally communicated with Members; and he himself had frequently done for them what no hon. Member opposite had done, notwithstanding their "lip" sympathy. He was one of the few men in the House who had endeavoured to induce the Government to do justice to this important class, and to make use of the legislative power of Parliament in compelling the Boards of Guardians in Ireland to do their duty to the teachers. Hon. Members opposite might talk as much as they pleased; but why they did not make better use of their words and power his unintelligible intellect was unable to comprehend. The teachers, however, fully comprehended one thing. They knew that hon. Members opposite were repeatedly making declarations in their favour, and asserting their readiness to do justice to the teachers in every possible way. They were constantly

vaunting all that the teachers and the country owed to them; but they invariably declined to put their precepts into practice, and never attempted to use legislative means for furthering the interest of the teachers and compelling the Boards of Guardians to do justice to them. He trusted that what he said now, if unintelligible to hon. Gentlemen opposite, would be intelligible to the people of Ireland, and that the Irish people would realize the difference between the "lip" sympathy of their professed friends and a determined effort to secure that their grievances should be remedied and full justice done to them. The statement of his hon. Colleague (Mr. Molloy) as to the treatment the teachers received from the Board of Commissioners he entirely confirmed. He could not understand why, when a man devoted his time and labour and the midnight oil to the advancement of himself in the world by hard study, and was then told that he had failed in his examination, that he should not be fully informed as to the cause of his failure. That was a legitimate matter for the consideration of the House, or of any other deliberative assembly. It was said they were not to be free to speak their minds openly, although they naturally desired to ventilate their grievances with their Representatives, if they had the opportunity. He maintained that it was for the House to declare what the conduct of the Board ought to be in this respect. It was an educational question, and he should have thought that with reference to such a question all Party politics might have been laid aside, and that the Orangemen, Moderate Liberals, Nationalists, and the still larger number who in Ireland were waiters upon Providence, wishing to see in what direction the wind would blow—whether it blew across the Atlantic as it did for nine months out of the 12 in Ireland—would all meet on a common ground. As to the wind, he warned hon. Members opposite that the day might come when they would find it blowing across the Atlantic in a way that would be anything but pleasant for them—for there were other things blown across the Atlantic besides steamers; and in his humble opinion the hesitating class in Ireland, men without the strong and grand vertebræ which used to be a characteristic of the Irish race, who regarded the whole political atmosphere of Great Britain as unwholesome, and would willingly accede to the suggestion of the right hon. Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright) that they might with advantage be towed 2,000 miles away from the British Isles, who were not adventurers like Cromwell and Raleigh and the pirates of the old Spanish Main, not men who were ready to write one thing one day and another the next — not men who would praise people in a religious journal to-day and denounce them in a journal of free thought to-morrow——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must again ask the hon. Baronet to confine himself to the Question before the Committee, which is the Vote for Education in Ireland.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN apologized for having transgressed the ruling of the Chair. He should have confined himself to the Question from the first, were it not that the speeches he had heard had led him into a digression. He had come down to the House that day to support his hon. Colleague (Mr. Molloy), with whom he had never had a difference, except a political one. He had come there to say a few words upon a social Irish question; but he had found himself surrounded with an atmosphere of Nationalism, and he had to ask the pardon of the Chair if, when suffocated by it, he had used an expression he should apologize for. He knew hon. Gentlemen opposite, and he knew what was said of them in Ireland. In that country, if they had the mob with them, they said, "Go it, Jem," and if they had not the mob with them they said, "Laugh him down." There was nothing like laughing a man down when they were unable to answer him. But that was not the question. The question was whether there had been an improper interference with the National school teachers of Ireland. If there had been, no hon. Member in that House would be stronger in his denunciation of so abominable a principle than he would; and he had no doubt that he would receive the support of every hon. Gentleman sitting around him; but if it was not so, and the question was simply how these teachers were to have their grievances remedied, let them come to the point at once, and not spend their

time in talk without arriving at a legislative remedy. He assumed that hon. Members opposite would give British power in Ireland some two or three years to last; and, assuming that that was so, were they to allow a deep sense of injustice to sink into the hearts of these men maltreated by the Government—maltreated by the Boards of Guardians, and maltreated by everyone in Ireland who had the right to interfere with them. If hon. Members were really anxious to do something for this class he would ask them, and especially the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond), and the hon. Member for the County of Waterford (Mr. P. J. Power), to restrain their Nationalistic influences until they found themselves in the possession of full power. In the meantime, it was not desirable to allow these men to starve, or to exist in a state of semi-starvation; but by the action of the House of Commons, irrespective of the fact that there were elected Guardians, or *ex officio* Guardians, the time had arrived for requiring the Poor Law Unions to act upon some compulsory system.

MR. DEASY said, he was sure the Committee would feel that the hon. Baronet need have made no apology for the speech which he had just delivered.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN: I made no apology, Sir.

MR. DEASY said, he begged the hon. Baronet's pardon. Every one of them must be very much obliged to the hon. Baronet for his very learned speech; and they must feel indebted to the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. W. Redmond) for having afforded him an opportunity of making it. They had been told for some time that there was no prospect of the hon. Baronet ever being returned again for King's County; but, after the speech they had just listened to, he trusted that some of the Universities whose claim to representation was under discussion the other night would recognize the hon. Baronet's genius. If they would only do so, he did not think the House would any longer be charged with not having a fit Representative of learning among its Members. He now wished to put one or two questions to the Chief Secretary. The first had reference to a point which had been raised by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) in regard to the teachers who went up for examination not receiving from the Board of National Education any information as to the particular subjects in which they had failed. He was of opinion that, whether the managers applied for it or not, it ought to be readily supplied to the teachers who presented themselves for examination. He did not think that a more reasonable proposition could be made, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would accede to it. In many places the manager might have no curiosity to see such a Return; but whether he had or not, he did not see why the manager should be supplied with information as to the particular subject in which the teacher had failed. There was another point raised by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway County (Colonel Nolan), which had not been answered, and it had reference to the compulsory provision of residences for the teachers at the schools. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman, in any Bill he was about to introduce on the subject, would make it compulsory upon the owners of land to give a site for the teachers' dwellings. It was impossible for a teacher who had to walk three or four miles in the morning to the schoolhouse, after having spent the night in a wretched and miserable hovel, to give that attention to his duties which he would be able to give if he resided in a comfortable house beside the school. It was equally necessary that good schoolhouses should be provided for the children, because it could not be expected that children would attend to the instructions of their teachers, no matter how competent those teachers might be, if their schoolroom was uncomfortable, and not suitable for the purpose for which it was used. He was afraid it was impossible, unless some such provisions were made, for the children to obtain that complete advantage from the services of the teacher to which they were entitled.

MR. KENNY said, there was another question of a somewhat similar nature which he would like to put to the right hon. Gentleman. Before putting it, he would say a word upon the teacher's grievance in being refused all information as to the subjects in which he had failed in his examination. He thought

the refusal was somewhat unfair to the teacher. No similar system was carried out in England, or even in Ireland, in regard to any other public examination. The candidates in all the examinations he was aware of who passed in two or three subjects and failed in others were informed as to the subjects in which they passed; and if it became necessary to present themselves again they were not examined in those subjects. The question he wished to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to was one which, some time ago, he brought under the notice of the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), when Secretary to the Treasury—namely, the curious anomaly which existed in Ireland with regard to the cost of repairs of non-National schools. The Commissioners of National Education in Ireland were always repairing the schools vested in them at the public expense; but schools vested in local Trustees—who were generally the parish priests in the South of Ireland, although probably in the North they were Presbyterian ministers—had to be repaired either by local contributions or by the Trustees themselves. In the South of Ireland nearly all the Bishops set their faces against vesting the local schools in the Commissioners, but preferred to vest them in local Trustees, who had to repair them at their own expense. They were placed by that circumstance at an unfair disadvantage compared with the vested public schools. He was acquainted with instances in which the local Trustees had spent as much as £100—perhaps a small sum in itself, but a good deal for a small local parish in Ireland—in repairs, because, being a non-vested school, it must have fallen into disrepair if an expenditure had not been incurred. This was a grievance which was keenly felt in many parts of Ireland, especially in the Southern Provinces. If the right hon. Gentleman would give an assurance that the subject would be taken into consideration, and steps taken to remedy what was an unquestionable grievance, it would be gladly accepted.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that he had on more than one occasion endeavoured to direct the attention of the Government to the character of the school books given out by the Board of Education. He had been kindly supplied with the latest edition of the books issued. He was sorry that he had not had time to examine them closely, and he was consequently unable to pronounce an opinion upon their literary or educational merits; but from a cursory examination they appeared to him to be very defective in one respect, inasmuch as they contained nothing whatever in connection with the National history. He thought the time was rapidly passing away when it would be considered good policy, even on the part of the Government, to deprive the children of the opportunity of knowing anything of the National history. If a fairly-educated Irishman who was accustomed to writing were asked to write the history of England, he would be able at once to obtain books which would enable him to write such a history; but if he were asked to write the history of Ireland, even if he were an Irishman of considerable education, it would take him at least six years before he could collect the history together.

Mr. WARTON rose to Order. He wished to know whether, under the present Vote, which was confined to the salaries of school teachers, it was competent for the hon. Member to discuss the question of the books supplied to the National schools?

The CHAIRMAN said, that hon. Members ought to address themselves directly to the items contained in the Vote; but he understood that the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) was about to put a question to the Chief Secretary with regard to the importance of affording to the school teachers certain information contained in certain books. If that was the object of the hon. Gentleman's question, he would not be out of Order.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the hon. Gentleman had stated with perfect accuracy the object he had in view; and he wished to make a suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary with regard to the question. If the right hon. Gentleman were dealing with a Scotch question, he would, no doubt, see the utter absurdity of depriving the children of all means of studying Scotch history. By a parity of reasoning, it was absurd for the Government to deprive Irish children of the opportunity of reading and studying Irish history. In fact, the right hon. Gentleman had

already laid down the doctrine that they ought, as far as the Imperial interests of the country would allow, to govern Ireland in accordance with Irish ideas; and the necessary corollary of that position was that the Irish people should be allowed an opportunity of learning Irish history. There had been a work recently published called *The History of the Kingdom of Ireland*. It was not written by an Irishman, nor even by an Irish Liberal, nor an English Liberal; but the name of the gentleman who was the author of it—Mr Walpole—suggested at once that he was the son of a distinguished Conservative statesman. Therefore, he presumed that the work was written by an English Conservative. It gave, however, a readable account of Irish history, and it was certain that it was free from anything in the nature of Nationalist bias. It gave a very impartial and readable view of Irish history; and he thought it would be of great advantage indeed if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would distribute a few copies, as an experiment, among the Irish schools, or any other work that might commend itself to his own judgment. The great object was that the new generation of Irish people now growing up should not, like preceding generations, be left without any knowledge of the history of their own country, while they were supplied with that of every other country.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN confessed that it did appear to him somewhat extraordinary that the history of Ireland should be excluded; but, at the same time, they were all aware of the reason of that extraordinary anomaly. The difficulty was to obtain an impartial work upon a subject on which opinions were so greatly at variance. The hon. Member asked him whether in the Scotch schools the history of Scotland was not taught. He might tell the hon. Member that his right hon. Friend the Vice President of the Council (Mr Mundella) had experienced great difficulty in regard to the school books used in the Scotch schools. It appeared that some of the school books in Scotland gave different versions of great historical facts. That was the sole reason for the absence of Irish history from Irish schools; but he might say that if any means could be invented for getting over the anomaly no one would be more delighted than himself. The hon. Member for Ennis (Mr. Kenny) had put a question to him about the vested and non-vested schools. He was aware that there was a difficulty; but his attention had not been specially directed to the grievance, and he could only promise the hon. Member that he would look into it carefully. With regard to the question of sites, and various other subjects to be dealt with in the Bill about to be introduced by the Government, he thought it would hardly be in accord with the ordinary rules, nor would it be convenient, that he should forestall, by any declaration on the subject, the contents of that Bill. He would, therefore, prefer to say nothing at all upon the subject; but he would rather that the hon. Member should wait until next week until the Bill itself would be introduced.

MR HEALY said, the late Chief Secretary Mr. Trevelyan had promised to introduce a Bill, and was asked to lay it upon the Table. He said that he had no objection to give a certain Return relating to it, but the undertaking had never, as yet, been redeemed, although the promise was given on the 20th of January, 1884.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN apprehended that, in the case referred to, the Return had not been moved for. When his right hon. Friend said he had no objection to give it, he probably expected that it would be moved for, although it subsequently happened that it was not. He would look into the matter and see if the Return could not be given. He thought there would be no objection to produce it. The only other point to which it was necessary he should allude had reference to a subject which had been brought before the Committee during the discussion of the Vote—namely, the question of the amount of information to be given to teachers who went up for examination as to their success or failure. He did not think that there was any practical difference between himself and hon. Members opposite. There was a difference at first sight, because the claim put forward was that the information should be furnished directly to the teachers, and not through the intervention of the managers. He had stated that that was objectionable, because the managers were

entitled to know everything that related to the professional qualifications of the teachers, and it was desirable that the teachers should not be communicated with directly by the Board on such subjects. But he quite agreed with hon. Members, and he would go so far as to say that he would see that the information was given—that was to say, all the information as to the details of the examination which were usually given should be communicated to the teachers.

MR. SEXTON asked what the right hon. Gentleman meant by "usual information?"

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that he referred to what happened in connection with other examinations. He could not say that any particular detail, or all the details, would be supplied; but whatever details were usually communicated to those who passed an examination, or who failed to pass one, such information should be given to the managers of the National schools to be communicated to the teachers themselves.

MR. SEXTON said, the promise of the right hon. Gentleman held out some prospect of improvement; but he did not know what the information was that was usually given. At any rate, any information was better than no information at all. He admitted that if the manager desired information he ought to get it; but, on the other hand, if the teacher communicated direct to the Board, he ought to receive a reply direct; and, whether the teacher or the manager applied, the information ought not to be withheld. At a future time they would bring before the House the whole question of the constitution of the Board; and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would by that time have inquired into the matter, and made up his mind.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he had only a few words to address to the Committee in regard to the subject referred to by his hon. Friend the Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor). In the course of his speech the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had made a very important statement—a statement which Irish Members would recollect. He believed it was the first time that the right hon. Gentleman had had the courage to make a statement of the kind, which was to the effect that he was surprised, and that it was not right, that Irish history should be excluded from the schools in Ireland.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I said it was an extraordinary circumstance that it should be excluded.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he had understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that, but for one circumstance, Irish history would be taught in the schools, and that was, because it was difficult to get a history setting forth facts in a sufficiently impartial manner. Certainly, that was the tenour of the right hon. Gentleman's speech. And they had to consider this. The only reason, according to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, why Irish history was not taught was, that there was no sufficiently impartial history; he would pledge himself that there was not to be found a sufficiently impartial history. But hon. Members on those Benches wished the people of Ireland to have a knowledge of the history of their country. The right hon. Gentleman appeared to think that the rising generation ought to be taught Irish history; he appeared to be sorry that they were not taught Irish history; and he (Mr. W. Redmond) thought that, under the circumstances, he should cause a proper history of Ireland to be written for the use of the National schools. A very impartial history might be written setting forth material facts; but Irish Members would not ask the right hon. Gentleman for a history setting forth very fairly the atrocities committed by the English Government in Ireland. The broader facts might be taught, and Irish Members would keep to themselves the duty of teaching the rising generation in certain respects what the history of Ireland had been—that was to say, the Government might teach them the broader outlines of history, and Irish Members would teach them the rest, such as the massacres at Wexford and other places.

Vote *agreed to*.

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

(2.) £14,750, Diplomatic Services.

MR. GORST remarked, that this Vote included a sum for the West African Conference at Berlin. He did not wish

to call the attention of the Committee to what he might call the abnormal proceedings at Berlin, but he desired to refer to some conversations which had taken place between Mr. Meade, Dr. Busch, and Prince Bismarck. Those conversations had appeared to Her Majesty's Government of such great importance that they had laid them before Parliament in a Blue Book, called "Memorandum of Conversations at Berlin on Colonial Matters, between Mr. Meade, Prince Bismarck, and Dr. Busch." Now, it was true that those conversations appeared, in the first instance, to have been of a friendly and confidential character; but there was no doubt that the Government had adopted and acted upon the views of the Colonial Office negotiator, and therefore he did not think they could in any way throw the responsibility for what was said and done upon the shoulders of their official, but he thought that the Government must be held responsible for the course taken. He looked upon the Blue Book as a very remarkable one, and one which deserved a great deal more public attention than he was sorry to say it had yet received. The conversations took place at the time when the German Chancellor was in no very good humour with the English Government. In the month of May last, Prince Bismarck had addressed to the German Ambassador in London a despatch which probably hon. Members would never see, but which had been read by one or two of our officials, and had been called by them a very remarkable despatch. It was a despatch which he understood that Earl Granville said he had never received, and although it had been communicated subsequently to Sir Edward Malet at Berlin and Earl Granville in Downing Street, and although it was one which he was sure the whole world would like to see, it would probably never be published However that might be, it had been described by Sir Edward Malet as a very remarkable despatch. Sir Edward Malet said that this despatch pointed out that, in the commencement of German Colonial enterprise, England might render signal services to Germany; and it said that, for such services, Germany would use her best endeavours in England's behalf on questions affecting her interests nearer home. The despatch pressed these considerations with arguments to show the mutual results which such understanding would produce, and Prince Bismarck instructed Count Munster to say that if it could not be effected, the result would be that Germany would seek from France the assistance she had sought from England, and would draw closer to her on the same lines. That was undoubtedly a remarkable despatch, and it appeared that not only did Prince Bismarck communicate that despatch to the German Ambassador in London, but that he also sent his own son to impress these considerations on Her Majesty's Government. He failed, however, not only to obtain their assent to his proposal, but to make them even understand the inducements which were held out. The effect of that was that Prince Bismarck, to say the least of it, was out of humour with the English Government, and that in all the Colonial policy of Germany from that date forward, she contrived to keep open a sore between the two great countries in almost every quarter of the world. If he were asked to state precisely what was the character of the conversations which took place between the Colonial Office negotiator and Dr. Busch in Berlin, he should describe it as an attempt to establish a "raw" in every part of the world in which a raw could be established with this country. Now, the first subject touched upon in this conversation was the Cameroons, as to which Prince Bismarck had certainly forestalled this country. The Government had had the offer of the Sovereignty from King Bau, but not having been able to make up their minds in two years whether they would take the country or not, Prince Bismarck stepped in and hoisted the German flag. There was no doubt that our Consul and the English officials there, to use the language of the German Admiral, "had not kept quite away from a lively sympathy with rebellish negroes." That state of affairs was frankly admitted by our negotiator. Then as to Samoa. With regard to this Island, it was notorious that there was a desire on the part of the Government of New Zealand to annex it, and that they had only been stopped from annexing it by the prohibition of Her Majesty's Government. On the 4th of December, the Government, through their Ambassador, made

an offer to the German Government that they would give an assurance with respect to the independence of Samoa, provided that a reciprocal assurance was given by Germany. Now, that reciprocal assurance had never been received up to the present day. One of the subjects touched upon in these conversations was the complaint of Earl Granville that he had not received any reply to his letter, in which he had offered the assurance to respect the independence of Samoa if Prince Bismarck would give a reciprocal assurance. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had said, in answering a Question put to him on the subject, that there was not in existence any document which bound the German Government not to annex Samoa. [Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I said no Treaty existed.] He (Mr. Gorst) said that there was no document signed by Prince Bismarck, or by any German authority, which would prevent Germany annexing Samoa to-morrow. He said that without fear of contradiction, and if the noble Lord thought he was wrong, he should be glad if he would produce such document. The noble Lord could, no doubt, produce despatches from Sir Edward Malet, showing what his own Government had said; he could produce a despatch from Count Münster, showing what the German Government had said, but he did not suppose the German Government would be bound by that, unless there was also a document signed by some official of their own. But what he complained of chiefly was the scoffing manner in which the opinions and views of Colonial Ministers were spoken of. He was bound to say that he thought a Minister of this country, addressing a Foreign Minister on the subject of the Colonies, ought not to express to him the contempt which was expressed on this occasion in respect of Colonial opinions and Colonial views. Mr. Meade pointed out to Prince Bismarck that the Colonial Governments could not undertake annexation, and that in the case of Samoa, Her Majesty's Government were guiltless of that which, by implication, New Zealand was guilty. Then they spoke of the necessity of soothing the susceptibilities of Australia and New Zealand, and pointed out to the Prince that it was easy to set their minds at rest. In fact, the conversation was practically an invitation to Prince Bismarck to enter into a conspiracy with the Government of Great Britain to carry out Imperial policy at the expense of Colonial policy by soothing the susceptibilities of the Colonists and setting their minds at rest. Having thus dealt with the Island of Samoa, the Government proceeded to deal in the most imprudent and most reckless manner with the Islands of the New Hebrides, which lay between New Caledonia and Fiji. Those Islands actually at one time formed part of the British Dominions; they were included in the Commission of the Governors of New Zealand, and they were so continued down to the time of Governor Brown in 1859, who was the first Governor who had not the New Hebrides included in his Commission. Therefore, they were at one time part of the Dominions of Great Britain. Well, in 1879, something in the nature of a Diplomatic Convention was made with the French Government, by which both countries bound themselves to respect the independence of the New Hebrides. That arrangement, which might be more properly described as a diplomatic understanding, was made without any communication with the Governments of Australia and New Zealand; it was made behind their backs without their knowledge, and it only came to their knowledge several years afterwards. The result of that was that since that date all British purchases of land and all British settlements in the New Hebrides had come to an end; but the French had gone on year after year purchasing land and occupying a position there, and paving the way for the occupation of those Islands by France. It was notorious that the Government of France desired to get possession of the New Hebrides for the purpose of turning them into a penal settlement, because they were unable to develop their penal settlement in New Caledonia. In the face of that, he said it was a monstrous piece of imprudence on the part of the British Government for such a statement to be made to Prince Bismarck that France was to be allowed to take the New Hebrides group, which would naturally fall into the New Caledonian system. To make a statement of that kind, and then to publish it to the whole world, including the Government of

France, was, he said, one of the most reckless and one of the most imprudent acts of which a Government could be guilty; and the Colonial Office, as well as the Government, seemed to have had some misgivings about the proceedings in this matter, because it appeared from the documents that an attempt was made afterwards to explain away these statements. It was admitted that the circumstance had given rise to some not unnatural expressions of opinion in the Colonies. As to why the statement was made, the only reason given was that it was intended to show Prince Bismarck that there was another Power in the Pacific Ocean besides England and Germany. He (Mr. Gorst) did not think it likely that Prince Bismarck was ignorant of the fact that there was another Power in the Pacific besides Great Britain and Germany. But in order to show that this was the case, was it necessary to make this suggestion—which was sure to be taken advantage of by the French Government, who, at some future time when their flag was hoisted in the New Hebrides, would use the words to which he had called the attention of the Committee—namely, that these Islands would naturally fall into the New Caledonian system? He did not think that anything was said at that time about soothing the susceptibilities of the Australian people, or about setting the mind of the Australian Government easy, but he could assure the noble Lord that this was a subject under which the Australasian Colonies were extremely susceptible, and unless he could give to them and to the Committee the most distinct pledge on the part of Her Majesty's Government that he would not, under any circumstances whatever, allow these Islands to be turned by France into a penal settlement, he imagined that this was not the last that he would hear of the proposal of Her Majesty's Government. He wished now to call the attention of the Committee to the case of Angra Pequena, because the gentleman who visited Prince Bismarck seemed to have had instructions to try and induce Prince Bismarck to accept some Islands lying off Angra Pequena as a sufficient reason for changing his Colonial policy and allowing great Britain to have her way in every other part of the Southern Hemisphere. Prince Bismark was rather sore about Angra Pequena, not only because we had taken these wretched little guano Islands and rocks near the coast, but because he thought we were going to cramp his energies inland. Indeed, he seemed to have been suspicious of the Bechuanaland Expedition, because he thought it might be intended for the purpose of occupying some territories on the West of Angra Pequena, and so cramp Germany in. And he complained that our maps represented as a desert some parts of the country that were unannexed by Great Britain; he said that those parts were not deserts at all, that he believed there were elephants, trees, and grass there, and that he wanted "elephants, trees, and grass." The only offer made to him by our Government was that of those wretched little guano Islands. Prince Bismarck was told that there was a waterless tract of land extending for 30 miles near Angra Pequena, and that if he crossed that desert he might annex South Africa up to the 20th degree of longitude; and the negotiator actually went on to point out the 20th meridian of longitude on Prince Bismark's map as if he could not see it himself. And that was the way we had endeavoured to cramp the action of this great man who had formed a large scheme of Colonization. It seemed that Her Majesty's Government wanted to force these Islands upon him; and their action in that respect reminded one of a money lender who forced pictures and articles of virtu on his borrower. Prince Bismarck said he did not care about the Islands; that the guano on them would soon be exhausted. Then he asked this pertinent question—"Will you give me Walfisch Bay;" and the answer was—"No, we will not give you Walfisch Bay, but you shall have the wretched little Islands we have been speaking about." After a vain endeavour to tempt this great Prince by the offer of these guano Islands at the Equator, they went on to speak of the New Guinea question, with respect to which there was, he believed, a very serious raw as to the boundaries of the British and German territories. Now there, again, was an extraordinary instance of the obliviousness of the English authorities; because it appeared, according to the statement of Prince Bismarck, that an intimation that a German Expedition was going to the North Coast of New

Guinea, was given to the Foreign Office; and not only that, but an *Aide Mémoire* was left at the Foreign Office in order that the circumstance might not be forgotten. It was extraordinary that no one at the Foreign Office appreciated that information, and the *Aide Mémoire*, he believed, was nowhere to be found. The English Government were willing to give a pledge on their part that they would not go beyond the South Coast of New Guinea, which left it perfectly open to the Germans to annex such of the North Coast as they liked; and the consequence was that the German Government annexed a portion of the North Coast of New Guinea, and we annexed the rest of it. We were very anxious to get rid of the Germans by persuading them to give up their position on the mainland. Prince Bismarck, however, said humourously that he preferred a group of Islands all to himself to being mixed up with other people on the mainland; but he would not give up his tract of country on the mainland, and, speaking of the great Possessions of Great Britain, he said she grudged Germany a little Possession of this kind. He pointed out that we were asking him to give up some advantages which they had obtained, in exchange for nothing at all. Then he believed the negotiator played his last card; he took a telegram from his pocket and read it. It was a telegram which had appeared in many English newspapers respecting the irritation and soreness of the Colony of Victoria on receiving the news of the annexation of New Guinea. That telegram was produced to Prince Bismarck, and then the whole of the negotiations ended by Prince Bismarck saying—

"You practically offer me nothing but these wretched guano Islands; how, therefore, can I alter my Colonial policy all over the world to meet the wishes of Great Britain?"

That was what they were asked partly to vote this money for. The sum now under consideration was to pay, amongst other things, for this wretched, abortive attempt to mend matters with Germany, which seemed to him to have only made matters worse. He was sorry to have to detain the Committee, and should not have done so if he could have foreseen another opportunity that Session of being able to call the attention of the people of the country to the unfortunate irritation kept up apparently without any cause whatever between this country and Germany. He thought it was desirable that that matter should be brought under the attention of the people of the country; not that he was in the least afraid of anything like a war, for it was impossible that there ever could be anything like a serious quarrel between this country and Germany, the interests of the two nations being so identical. The temper of the German people and their way of looking at political affairs were like ours, and both nations were anxious for peace and the progress of commerce. As a matter of fact, he did not believe that the ingenuity of the most reckless and foolish Government on the one side or on the other could by any possibility bring the two countries into a state of collision. The two countries ought to be friends. As he had said, our interests were identical with those of Germany, and the extension of the Colonial enterprize of that nation was really of the greatest possible advantage to us. Why we should snarl, grumble, and growl, as the British Government had been snarling and grumbling, at Germany during the last nine months, he did not know. It would have been much better to have accepted the original proposal of Prince Bismarck; and in regard to their new Colonial enterprize, Germany should not merely have had the passive good-will of England, but their active and most benevolent assistance. They ought to have given every help they possibly could give to the Colonizing schemes of that country. Even if they could not get a *quid pro quo*, the opportunity of securing the support of Germany in matters near at home in regard to which Her Majesty's Government stood in most need of assistance, ought to have guided them. Even if it had only been a matter of Colonial policy by itself, it was distinctly the policy of this country to have gone hand-in-hand with Germany, and to have given her every assistance in their power in the carrying out of her schemes. He was aware that, owing to speeches made "elsewhere," it was believed that a better frame of mind now existed, and that the foolish policy of the past six or nine months was not to be continued. He believed it was generally understood that an official statement to that effect had been made, that they were now good friends with Ger-

many, and that it was unnecessary to make the protest which he had ventured to make on this Vote. But if there was any root of bitterness still remaining between the Governments of the two countries with regard to Colonial policy, he ventured to say that there was hardly any sacrifice which the British Government could make for the purchase of the warm sympathy and friendship of Germany in the Colonies which it would not be prudent and judicious to make. He was certain that there was no occasion in this matter to in any way infringe upon the rights or susceptibilities of the Australian Colonies. He could not quite get rid of the idea that there was at one time on the part of the Government a disposition to enter into a conspiracy, as he had said, with Prince Bismarck for the furtherance of certain Imperial objects in the Pacific Ocean, without much respect or regard for Colonial opinion. They did not want that. What was wanted in Australia or New Zealand was that the Government should do nothing behind the backs of the Colonies. The time might come when their Colonies might demand to have a voice in our foreign policy. That point, however, had not yet been reached. Their demand at the present moment was much less. What they demanded was information — that they should know what it was intended to do before any steps were taken. If Her Majesty's Government would only at the present time give information to the Governments of the Australian Colonies and New Zealand as to the policy it was intended to pursue in the Pacific, he did not think there would be any difficulty with these Colonies; but, in his opinion, the interests of Australia, New Zealand, and Great Britain would alike be served by the closest and warmest friendship being kept up with Germany in regard to the course to be pursued in the Pacific Ocean.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he felt bound to congratulate the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) upon his very able and interesting speech, in which he had brought before the Committee and the country matters of the highest and most vital importance to the interests of themselves and their Colonies. The Committee would not be surprised when he stated that he cordially concurred in every word of the concluding part of the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech with regard to the necessity for close and intimate friendship with the German Power. During the past four years, he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), had in every possible way endeavoured to bring before the House and the Members of Her Majesty's Government, who had always shown a remarkable reluctance to realize its importance, the necessity — the absolute necessity for the interests of this country — of a friendly and close alliance with Germany. The German Power, as his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) had said, was the natural ally of this country. Their interests were more or less identical with those of Germany, and they clashed with those of Germany less than with those of any other European State. They had common enemies in Europe, and both Powers were threatened from the same quarter; and in this matter Austria was in a similar position. They were all three not only natural allies, but their interests were menaced by common foes—by foes whom he might describe as the perpetual disturbers of European peace —in the extreme West and extreme East of the Continent of Europe. It was an unfortunate fact that the policy of Her Majesty's Government for the past five years had been based upon a directly contrary principle. They had sought to lean upon France and Russia, while they had turned the cold shoulder to Germany. They had refrained from the expression of any of those warm and kindly sentiments with which they had been overbounding towards the French Republic in regard to their foreign policy. They had a most interesting official in this country—the gentleman who had been sent to Berlin on the important mission with which the Committee was familiar. This gentleman had repudiated all direct responsibility; but it was perfectly certain that he could not have made the suggestions he had made without having had a general outline of the policy sketched out to him, at any rate in conversation, by the Foreign Secretary. There could be no doubt that Mr. Meade's action had been based upon instructions received from the Foreign Secretary. It was not difficult to imagine that, before he started, Mr. Meade had been empowered to offer Prince

Bismarck concessions which turned out to be absolutely worthless, and which that Statesman rejected with that *sang froid* so characteristic of him. His hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) had gone into some of the important points of the Memorandum which was in the hands of hon. Members. Mr. Meade had tried to settle some general policy, and to place their Colonial relations with Germany on a better footing; and it was obvious, from the wide character of his offers, embracing, as they did, an offer to make concessions in New Guinea, Angra Pequena, the New Hebrides, the Cameroons, and other places, that Mr. Meade was empowered to enter into negotiations of a most important character covering the whole sphere of their Imperial relations with Germany. Now, before going into the Memorandum, he should like to call the attention of the Committee to a most astonishing circumstance which took place the other day, one which illustrated better, perhaps, than any number of minor incidents, the general character of the Colonial policy of the Government. A short time ago Prince Bismarck delivered a speech upon the relations between England and Germany of the utmost European importance—a speech which had rung throughout Europe, which had been fully reported in all the London newspapers, and which he would venture to say had been read by every Member of the Committee—with one great exception—no matter how slight his interest in these questions. In that speech Prince Bismarck, whilst censuring strongly the conduct of the Foreign Office towards the German Government, expressed the warmest friendship for the English people. Prince Bismarck had really gone out of his way to express friendship for England, and to mention the valuable advice which he had throughout these matters offered to Her Majesty's Government. Well, would it be believed that five days after that speech appeared in all their public journals the Prime Minister of this country was able, in his place in the House of Commons, to state that he had never seen it? After that, what could they expect from the present Government—what could they expect from a Government, the Head of which did not take the trouble to read the speeches of the greatest master of statecraft in Europe on questions of most vital interest to this country? He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) thought hon. Members might give up the whole question of the Foreign Policy of the present Government as a hopeless case. Well, he trusted, however, that they had now reached a turning point in the unfortunate relations—he would say in the unfortunate reversal of the friendly relations with Germany established by the late Government. It had been his fortune on various occasions within the past four years to ask for information on this point, and to have been invariably met by a studied denial that the relations between Germany and England were in the slightest degree in danger or even changed. He must confess, however, that this denial on the part of the Government had been much less emphatic under the present Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs than it had been under his Predecessor. It had always been denied that there was any misunderstanding with Germany, although the documentary evidence plainly showed first a change of feeling, then a coolness, and ultimately an alienation which at one time almost amounted to a breach between the two countries. He hoped that the cycle of alienation, which began with the famous insult to Austria, and went on to the publication of the confidential Memorandum between Sir Edward Malet and Prince Bismarck, had come to an end. With regard to the publication of that confidential despatch, the point was one upon which the noble Lord (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) should give the Committee some information presently. He should like to know, for instance, whether Sir Edward Malet was consulted by the Foreign Office before the publication of that confidential communication of November 4, or of some date between November 4 and November 10? The Government had made an impotent and ridiculous attempt to base their policy on an alliance with France and Russia; but the attempt had, happily, been relinquished, and by the stern course of events Her Majesty's Government had been compelled to realize that their only true policy lay in a firm friendship and intmate alliance with Berlin and Vienna. That alliance effected, they might hope that the constant disasters and humiliations which had fallen upon England in

regard to her foreign relations would come to an end at last. Now, he wished to tell the Committee a little episode which happened to him the other day, which showed the absolute ignorance of Her Majesty's Government with regard to these matters. He had been in conversation with a Gentleman of considerable position in Her Majesty's Government—he would not state who he was, and Her Majesty's Ministers could, therefore, take the statement he was about to make for what it was worth. Their conversation had turned upon their relations with Prince Bismarck and Germany. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had ventured to make the suggestion he was now offering—namely, that it was of the utmost importance that cordial relations should be established between the two countries. Upon that the Gentleman with whom he was conversing, said—"What do you mean? Why should we trouble ourselves—how can Prince Bismarck hurt us?" He must confess that this reply staggered him. That was the opinion of a Gentleman who might be taken as of the general average of the intelligence of the Government and of the Liberal Party, and it had so surprised him that he hardly knew for the moment how to answer. At last, however, he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) said—"Germany cannot invade England with her legions, it is true; but suppose you alienate her to such an extent that Prince Bismarck advises Russia to advance on India, and tells Turkey to render our position intolerable in Egypt, what would our position be?" This came in the nature of a revelation to the Member of the Government to whom he was speaking. Well, the sole and only reason for the long alienation from Germany was, he was afraid, a factious desire on the part of Her Majesty's Government to reverse everything that the Earl of Beaconsfield had done. The Committee must have a vivid recollection of what the Earl of Beaconsfield had effected, particularly in regard to that greatest feat of modern statesmanship, whereby, on the strength of the German alliance he had gained in 1878, he was enabled at the Berlin Conference to deprive Russia of more than half of the spoils of her victorious Campaign against Turkey. So long as the alliances effected by the Earl of Beaconsfield had been maintained, their position in Europe was secure, as also was the peace of Europe. Their alliance with Germany was practically a great peace union. Germany, Austria, and England were peaceful States, and contented with what they had—in Europe, at all events—and it was to their interests to maintain the peace of Europe, whereas the interests of France and Russia were constantly to break that peace. Here he might say that he had omitted to do what he ought to have done earlier—that was to call the attention of the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) to two statements which had been given in the short Memorandum in the hands of hon. Members. They showed the German feeling towards the present Government. If the noble Lord would turn to page 4 of the Memorandum, he would see that Mr. Meade stated that he had seen there was a strong feeling in Germany against England, and that only a short time before he had noticed fresh proofs of it. This came at a time when Ministers were most free in their denial of the fact that there was any coldness between Germany and England. On page 11 it would be found that Prince Bismarck was reported to have stated that up to two years ago he had done everything he could to facilitate English policy in Egypt and elsewhere, but that he had been treated in a manner which showed that the actions of the British Government did not come up to their professions. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) took it that if it had not been for the real friendship of Germany towards England, the policy of Her Majesty's Government would long ago have led to a rupture between the two countries, because in every respect during the last four years they had either neglected or absolutely gone against the advice Germany had offered. Hon. Members, on reading the advice of the German Chancellor, would find how statesmanlike and beneficial to them it had been. Prince Bismarck had told them to increase their interest over Egypt as much as they could by friendly arrangements with its Sovereign, the Sultan of Turkey. That was what the Conservative Party had been endeavouring to impress upon Her Majesty's Government during the last four years—they had sought to impress upon

them that as long as Turkey was a powerful State, and remained the Sovereign Power of Egypt, they could act in that country by the assistance of Turkish influence; and that if Turkey were broken up, they could then remain in Egypt as her residuary legatee. He was afraid that the remarkable phrase which occurred on page 10 of the Memorandum would only too probably come about. Mr. Meade had told Prince Bismarck that his hoisting of the German flag in New Guinea would have a most "deplorable effect on Australia;" and he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) ventured to think that there was something else which would have a deplorable effect on Australia—a more deplorable effect than the hoisting of the German flag in New Guinea—that was to say, the effeteness of the defence of the interests of the Colonies by Her Majesty's Ministers. It was impossible to exaggerate the utter absurdity and impotence of the conduct of negotiations by Her Majesty's Government, as illustrated by their own Memoranda. A telegram had been received which contained a protest, in the name of Australia, against the British Government for not saving her from danger and disgrace, so far as New Guinea was concerned, and declaring that the bitterness of feeling which had been engendered would not die out for generations. The Committee knew also that Resolutions had been carried in Australia, urging the retirement of the present Colonial Minister from his position, and he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was strongly of opinion that such a course was most desirable. Hon. Members heard a great deal about Tory legacies; but it seemed to him that the only Tory legacy the Government or the Liberal Party had a right to complain of was the present Head of the Colonial Office (the Earl of Derby). Hon. Members would probably agree with him in that view. When they remembered how easy it would have been for Her Majesty's Government to have forestalled Germany in the matter of New Guinea, and that without raising the slightest ill-feeling in Germany, because Germany was a Power which always recognized *faits accompli*. If Her Majesty's Government had taken possession of unoccupied land two years ago, and if the Earl of Derby had not deliberately quashed the annexation by Australia, without any apparent reason, the whole difficulty with regard to New Guinea would have fallen to the ground. The Australian Colonies would have got what they wanted, and we should not have been placed in our present position. He found the strongest evidence in the Papers that Her Majesty's Government had only to raise their little finger to secure the possession of New Guinea for Australia, and that it would have been as easy to have obtained it as it would have been by a simple telegraphic message to have saved the life of Hicks Pasha. Mr. Meade, in one of his despatches, stated that Her Majesty's Government, if they had cared to, could have accomplished the thing in a few hours. It was evident that Her Majesty's Government had incurred the danger of falling between two stools—namely, Prince Bismarck and the Colonies. As to the interpretation put upon Mr. Scott's despatch, the document was clearly a very important one. Her Majesty's Government had declared their policy with regard to New Guinea—a subject which was of vital interest to the Australian Colonies; but it was clear that that despatch was so indistinctly written that Her Majesty's Government and Prince Bismarck found themselves able to place perfectly contrary interpretations upon it. What could the Committee think of a Government which wrote such despatches as that? That the Government were practised in writing despatches they knew from the statement of Prince Bismarck the other day. He had said that within the past six or eight months he had received from the British Foreign Office no fewer than 128 despatches. He had said that owing to some fault, not his own, Her Majesty's Ministers had, since July last year, written him 128 despatches, which was more than he had received from all the other Powers put together in six years. That showed the way in which the business of this country was conducted. The greatest distinctness was necessary in despatches. Yet it was to be feared that many others of these documents were as indistinct in their meaning as the one referred to. Prince Bismarck had gone further than charging our Ministry with indistinctness, and had said that we had full warning of what was coming. If Prince Bismarck's statement was correct, it placed Her Majesty's Go-

vernment in a very awkward position indeed, because it made them responsible for statements which were directly in the face of the facts as viewed by the German Government. Prince Bismarck said that Count Munster had been ordered to tell them that this German Expedition to New Guinea was about to be sent. He (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had not come down prepared for this debate that night, otherwise he should have had with him all the replies of Ministers during the Autumn Session, which, he thought, were in contradiction to the statement of Prince Bismarck that they had full warning of the German Expedition. That was a point upon which there could be very little doubt indeed. Either Count Munster did tell them that this Expedition was going to New Guinea in July, or he did not. As to the apology which had been offered to Germany in "another place," he desired to say this—that he did not wish to criticize it in an unfavourable spirit, because, in view of their policy all over the world, and in view of the necessity of their making friends, that statement had a good deal of statesmanship in it. His respect for Earl Granville had been increased by the frankness with which he had made the apology. But he did not believe that Earl Granville was as responsible for the state of things which had rendered that apology necessary as the Prime Minister. He believed it had been hopeless perversity on the part of the Prime Minister which had driven them further and further away from Germany, and had prevented their Foreign Office from carrying out any manly policy, and had put the unfortunate Foreign Minister in the position of offering himself up as a scapegoat on the altar of the Prime Minister's remarkable blundering in connection with all their foreign relations. Though he regretted that an English Foreign Minister should be obliged to apologize to any Foreign Power, yet, as he had said, he could not criticize Earl Granville's apology in any unfriendly spirit. He would call attention to only two points in connection with their relations with Germany on this Colonial question. As to Angra Pequena, the whole case might be put into a nutshell. The despatches extended over more than two years. They began with a proposition from Germany that we should be responsible for the protection of German subjects in a certain portion of South-West Africa; they went on to a repudiation on the part of Her Majesty's Government of Her Majesty's Sovereignty over that district, or the right of interference there; they went on to a statement that if Germany ventured to interfere to protect her own subjects in a place where we had repudiated responsibility, it would be an unfriendly act on the part of Germany; and had concluded with the humiliating *finale* that England, who had refused to protect German subjects in Angra Pequena, begged Germany to protect British subjects there. So with regard to Fiji. They repudiated and refused to recognize the German claims in the first place, and in the end finished by accepting them—by doing the very thing which at the outset they refused to do. The case of New Guinea was equally bad. They had an opportunity, two years ago, of endorsing the statesmanlike action of the Colonies. They neglected to do it, and not only that, but squashed the annexation, and they now found themselves obliged to make an apology to retain the friendship of Germany, which was perfectly secure when the present Government came into power and which Her Majesty's Government might have retained with ease, but had lost by a series of unparalleled blunders. That was the position. He shared the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) that the great concessions which he understood were being made to Germany, in order to undo the long course of blundering which Her Majesty's Government had gone through, were not excessive in view of the critical position in which they now stood in Europe and Asia. To maintain the vital interests of this country in preserving the German alliance they were sacrificing a certain strip of territory on the Western Coast of Africa. He hoped these sacrifices would be as small as possible. He was not estimating them at a large amount in order to complain of them, so much as to enumerate what they were, and to show that the friendship of Germany was really worth something. They were making these concessions on the West Coast of Africa and in New Guinea, and the latter would raise a bitter feeling in their Australian Colonies. It should ever be remembered that they owed their

Australian Colonies the deepest debt of gratitude for the patriotic and noble way in which they had come forward to support the interests of the Empire in a great crisis. The recent offers of military aid on the part of the Australian and North American Colonies was in striking contrast with the cold, neglectful, snubbing, and disintegrating policy which had been pursued by the Liberal Party during the last 20 years and longer, and especially by the present Government. The action of the Colonies had struck a warm and grateful chord in the hearts of Englishmen; and it was very hard, when all felt how close the bonds of the union between the Home Country and the Colonies were being drawn, and when everyone wished that those bonds should be drawn more close and intimate and permanent, that owing to the impotence of the present Government, the Colonies should be obliged to recall the fact that considerable interests of theirs were injuriously affected by the irritation between Her Majesty's Government and Germany. But he sincerely trusted that Colonial feeling on this matter would be as moderate as possible, and would be directed not against Germany and the Home Country, but against Her Majesty's Ministers, who were responsible for the difficulties of the present position. He hoped that the Colonies would be satisfied with making a protest against Her Majesty's Ministers in this respect, and not allow these misfortunes, which were deeply deplored, which the Conservative Party conceived to be wholly unnecessary, and which could have been easily avoided by foresight and courage, to alienate Colonial good feeling from them. It would be far better to sacrifice a Secretary of State for the Colonies, or half-a-dozen Ministers for the Colonies, than that Colonial feeling should have cause to be permanently irritated against the Home Country. He thanked the Committee for the indulgence it had shown him in allowing him to make these remarks. He had frequently endeavoured to impress upon Her Majesty's Government the great importance of preserving not merely an external appearance of cordiality with Germany—because it might be easy to smooth over the wrinkles produced in this matter in course of time—but of going at this question in a root-and-branch spirit. He agreed that they must establish more cordial relations with Germany if they wished to succeed in Egypt or anywhere else. They must sacrifice the rooted ideas of the Prime Minister and other Members of the Cabinet as to Russia and France, and make up their minds that Germany was their ally, and that their policy must be based upon an alliance with Germany. They must give up from the bottom to the top all this hopeless attempt to purchase a worthless alliance with the unstable Republic of France by concession after concession, for which no compensation or return whatever was obtained. Such folly only alienated from them the stable Monarchies of Austria and Germany, and threatened the interests of England in the Mediterranean and elsewhere. If he were assured that Her Majesty's Government realized the vital importance of the German alliance, and were determined to base their policy for the future upon that alliance, he should not be dissatisfied with the concessions which had been made to Germany. If it should turn out in the result that there was still no settled policy on the part of this Government to bring about a union and alliance with Germany, but merely a temporary attempt to buy off German hostility in certain parts of the world, then they would have to complain that Her Majesty's Government had sacrificed in vain not only the interests of the Colonies, but also of their own country.

MR. ONSLOW said, he thought the Committee must have been satisfied and pleased with the two speeches which had been made on this subject from this side of the Committee, and the more so because both of the speeches were very moderate indeed in their tone. He hoped that whatever he might have to say on this subject would be characterized, at all events for the present, by the same moderation which was observable in the remarks of his hon. Friends. His hon. Friend the Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had ever since 1880 been persistently bringing before the notice of the House this question of the friendly alliance between this country and Germany. Nearly every time that the hon. Gentleman had had an opportunity of bringing forward the question he had been met by jeers from

hon Gentlemen occupying seats below the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House; but he thought that, judging from what had transpired in the past, and from what was transpiring now, the Committee and the country would agree that his hon. Friend had been persistently right in that portion of his foreign policy. "Oh, oh!" The hon Member who cried "Oh, oh!" had been one of the most persistent jeerers of the hon Member for Eye ever since that hon. Gentleman had occupied a seat in the House. He Mr. Onslow was sure of this—that his hon. Friend's desire to obtain a friendly and stronger alliance with Germany had been perfectly consistent throughout, and had been justified by the facts which were now before them Well, now, what were they to say about the Papers which were now the subject of discussion by the Committee? The hon. Gentlemen Mr Gorst and Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett had so thoroughly exhausted the subject dealt with by those Papers that he need not make any quotations from them; but what he would say was this—that there was no man who had ever been at the head of affairs in any European country who had, judging from his despatches, both public and *quasi*-private, so persistently endeavoured to be friendly with England as Prince Bismarck. Every despatch contained in the Blue Book just issued showed that Prince Bismarck's primary wish had been to be on the most friendly terms with this country, and it had only been by the persistent stubbornness of Her Majesty's Government that the friendly relations between the two countries had been at all estranged — stubbornness, the one result of which was the great fiasco displayed in the apologies of Earl Granville in the other House, a fiasco which, in his Mr Onslow's opinion, did not redound to the credit and honour of this country. He hoped things were now changed; he hoped that bygones would be bygones, and that nothing had been done that would permanently estrange Prince Bismarck or the German people from this country, because if they were to hold their own in Europe, and maintain their Empire intact, it was utter madness for them to think they could do so without the assistance, or at least the cordial friendship, of Germany. As to the noble Earl (the Earl of Derby), who was now the Head of the Colonial Office, he Mr. Onslow was sure there were many who would like to use strong words He did not think the noble Earl, when he was Foreign Secretary under a previous Government, did the country much good, and he did not think that the noble Earl had done this Liberal Government much good as Colonial Secretary. All he Mr. Onslow could say was, reading history as he did, and knowing a little of the Colonial and Foreign policy of this country, that if they had had such men in the past as in the present, they never could have made the Empire what it was. "Oh, oh!" Of course, he was not speaking of the Earl of Derby privately, but concerning his political character, and he maintained that if they were to have many more of such men, be they Liberal or Conservative, they would never be able to hold or maintain their Empire. He could not understand how the noble Earl could retain Office after the snubbing he had received on all sides from Australia——

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Gentleman mean to connect his observations with the West African Conference, because I must remind him that that is the subject before the Committee?

MR ONSLOW said, he did propose to connect his observations with the subject before the Committee—namely, the German annexations in New Guinea, and he thought he was perfectly within Order in doing so. He would not say more about the policy of the Earl of Derby than this—that it seemed to be utterly inconsistent that one who had been so treated by Germany and by our own Colonies could possibly remain a moment longer in any Government. But that, however, was a matter for the Earl of Derby himself He was sure no one who loved the Empire as he hoped all hon. Members did—would wish the Colonial Office henceforth to be filled by a noble Earl or a right hon. Gentleman of the calibre of the Earl of Derby. There was an item in the Vote to which he wished to call the attention of Her Majesty's Government. It was the item of £2,500 set down for the Earl of Northbrook's Mission to Egypt Now, he was one of those who did not care how much they spent on missions of that kind, if such missions were only successful, but when they came to think

that all this money had been spent on a mission that was utterly abortive, which had led to no good result whatever, he thought they should have some explanation from the Government, especially as the Report of the Earl of Northbrook was not before the House or the country; he thought they had a right to some explanation from the Government how it was so large a sum was spent by the Earl of Northbrook in so short a time, and, as it appeared, to no advantage. It might be said that the Earl of Northbrook's was a very difficult mission. He recollected that, at the time it was announced that the Earl of Northbrook was to be sent to Egypt, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister said he was to be sent with the full authority of the Cabinet; that they could send no one better, as the Earl of Northbrook was a Cabinet Minister, and thoroughly understood the views of his Colleagues. It was a very remarkable thing that, if the noble Earl did understand the views of the Cabinet, the Report he drew up upon his return had not yet been brought to light; even at the present time it was not certain whether the Government intended to publish the Report or not; they had given no definite assurance that they would do so. It was only due to the country that one or other of Her Majesty's Ministers should tell Parliament whether they had got a *quid pro quo* for the expenditure of the sum now asked for. The Earl of Northbrook was away for a very short time—two months or three at the outside; even if he were away for the outside period mentioned, he (Mr. Onslow) would like to know how it was that so large a sum as £2,500 was expended? They knew, of course, that the Earl of Northbrook travelled a great deal; they knew that he had Private Secretaries with him, and that, of course, there would sure to be many incidental expenses, and he was certain that no one would grudge a halfpenny of the money—in fact, that they would not have grudged £5,000, or even £10,000—if the Earl of Northbrook's visit had led to a successful solution of the Egyptian difficulty; but, in his opinion, the effect of the Earl of Northbrook going to Egypt had only tended to embitter the feeling of the Egyptians against us; it had only tended to alienate still further the common people of Egypt from the ruling power, which was practically this country. Now, he wished to address a few words to the Committee upon what had become, he must admit, a very delicate subject. He had taken, as, no doubt, many hon. Gentlemen knew, the deepest interest in Sir Peter Lumsden's mission to Afghanistan. He put last Session several Questions which he thought to the point on the subject—first to his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India (Mr. J. K. Cross), and then when he, in common with others, thought the replies of the hon. Gentleman were not very satisfactory, or did not elucidate matters, he thought it desirable to put Questions to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister admitted, in answer, that the matter was of great importance. It had turned out, everyone would admit, a matter of the gravest importance, and he (Mr. Onslow) did not intend to go into the minutiæ of the mission of Sir Peter Lumsden; he did not wish to discuss what was the present policy of Her Majesty's Government; but he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister would not think he was going too far when he asked how it was that Sir Peter Lumsden undertook so important a mission without all the details being arranged beforehand; how it was that when he arrived upon the Afghan Frontier, the Russian Commissioner was not there to meet him, but was somewhere, it was believed, in Russia? The country had a right to know how it was that it was not arranged that the Russian Commissioner should meet General Lumsden, not exactly on the very day he arrived on the Frontier, but, at all events, within a reasonable time of his arrival. He assured the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that there were many people in England who considered the conduct of Russia to amount to a gross insult to this country; not only that, but he assured the Prime Minister that the conduct of Russia had been considered by the people of India to be a great insult. He did not wish to go into the policy of masterly inactivity with regard to Afghan affairs which had been adopted by Liberal Governments; but he did wish to point out to the Government that there were many of them sitting on the Conservative Benches who looked with the gravest suspicion on the mission of General Lumsden. He did not wish at all to embarrass the Govern-

ment in any way; but he asserted that the Committee ought to know somewhat definitely what were the instructions given to General Lumsden, and how it was that the Russians, who they were told had promised to meet General Lumsden on the borders of Afghanistan, were now Heaven knew where. It was of very serious moment indeed to the people of England that General Lumsden should have been sent on a fool's errand. The question of the advance of Russia and of General Lumsden's mission was now the talk of every bazaar throughout the length and breadth of India, and the Natives of India were asking themselves why the Queen's Government, at the present time, were allowing General Lumsden and his Mission to eat their heads off, as it were, on the borders of Afghanistan, and the Russians had not come out to meet them according to arrangement? It had been said that this question might be settled by a Conference of the Powers. He had seen that hinted; but he hoped that that was not to be the policy of Her Majesty's Government. This question had nothing whatever to do with the other European Powers; it was a question entirely between England and India and Russia. For the moment he would put India aside, and say that it was a matter entirely between England and Russia; it was a matter on which they had no right to ask Germany, or France, or Italy to interfere; they ought to undertake the responsibility—the very grave responsibility—upon their own shoulders; and he trusted Her Majesty's Government did not intend to relegate their duties to any other Foreign Potentate, or to a Conference of the European Powers. He was the last person in the world to endeavour to embarrass Her Majesty's Government in a difficult matter of this kind, and the Questions he had put on the Paper he had simply asked with the intention of getting some information from Her Majesty's Government. His simple wish was that the Government should take the Committee and the country into their confidence. He, in common with others in the House and in the country, was pleased when he heard the Prime Minister say that this was a National policy; he only hoped and trusted that the Prime Minister's idea of a National policy, as regarded Russia and India, was the same as his (Mr. Onslow's) own. He trusted that the Government of this country would put its foot down at the present time as firmly as possible, because it was of paramount importance to the interests of England and of India that they should do so. He trusted also that when the time came for a settlement of these grave questions, Her Majesty's Government would, as far as laid in their power, see that the settlement was a permanent one. It was no use patching up a matter for a time, by some means or other, and he thought it was quite possible that those means could be found. The Russian Government should be led to understand that whatever Treaty was made, if there was to be a Treaty, it should be final and definite. He hoped he would not be considered as travelling beyond the limits of the question at issue when he said that the people of this country rejoiced to hear that the Ameer of Afghanistan was to meet the Viceroy in India. He thought that that might be—he hoped it would be—an augury of peace for the future. At the same time, he was not quite sure that it was safe for the Ameer to leave his country at the present state of affairs. He sincerely hoped there would be some definite, some final conclusion of this unhappy state of things, which had been worrying India for many years past, and which had been worrying successive English Governments for many years past. He, for one, had always been opposed to what was called a policy of masterly inactivity. For such a policy the day had long gone by; and he hoped that for the future they would show the people of India and the people of Russia that they would not allow Russia to invade one atom of Afghan territory. While upon this subject, he would like to renew a Question he put to the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) not long ago. It was whether India was to pay the whole cost of Sir Peter Lumsden's mission? He had understood from the noble Lord that India was so to do; but in this Vote he noticed an item of £1,650 was set down for the Afghan Boundary Commission. He would like to know how such a sum came into this Vote? He was not at all sure that it was politic to allow India to

pay anything at all towards the expenses of this mission; but, of course, there were things to be said on both sides of the question. In conclusion, he could only once more say most emphatically that, notwithstanding the Votes the Committee were now asked to pass were somewhat high, he would not grudge one halfpenny of them if there was to be any success; if the payment of this money was to insure their rights in India, and to insure their rule over Egypt. The Government ought not to ask the country to fritter away its money upon missions which, up to date, had turned out purely abortive.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the discussion which has been raised has travelled over a very great number of points. I, of course, make no complaint against the hon. Gentlemen who have raised this discussion, although, no doubt, they felt that a discussion of a particular Vote in Committee of Supply was hardly the most convenient opportunity for raising some of the questions which they wished to bring forward. They stated they would not have done so if they had had any other opportunity. At the same time, Sir, the discussion, because we are in Committee of Supply, has been, to a great extent, one of detail. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), who opened the debate, mentioned a great number of points connected with various questions common to both the Colonial and Foreign Offices which have for the last few months attracted a considerable amount of attention. The hon. Member (Mr. Onslow) who has just sat down devoted most of his speech to the subject of Afghanistan; while the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) touched very nearly upon every conceivable subject which it is possible to mention in a speech relating to Foreign or Colonial affairs. He commenced his speech by an account of a discussion which he had with a Gentleman outside this House, who, he said, was a distinguished Member of the Liberal Party, and he treated us to such an alarming and lamentable picture of the condition to which that Gentleman was reduced after the discussion with him, that I really feel myself in a state of trepidation in following the hon. Gentleman. Notwithstanding, I shall attempt to touch upon some of the points which the hon. Gentleman raised. Now, with regard to nearly all of those points, there was one common and general proposition. The whole of the points brought forward by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) and the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) were all urged with the view of showing that there had been, according to them, a lamentable indifference on the part of Her Majesty's Government to securing the friendship and goodwill of Germany. Now, on many occasions last year I had to contend in this House against these assertions of the hon. Member for Eye and other hon. Members with regard to our relations with Germany. They have asserted, over and over again, that Her Majesty's Government has shown, not merely indifference to the friendship of Germany, but almost a positive desire to incur the enmity of that great country. I have denied that on previous occasions, and I deny it again; and I assert that no proof has ever been adduced, either on previous occasions or on this occasion, that Her Majesty's Government has shown itself insensible of the importance of the friendship of that country. There would, no doubt, be a certain temptation to follow out the various lines of argument which were indicated by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) and the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), and to show, with regard to these different questions—the questions of Angra Pequena and New Guinea—that the allegations of the hon. Gentlemen were not justified by facts. But it seems to me, that at a moment when, to the great satisfaction of all parties—to the House and to the country in general—an announcement was made to-day in Parliament, showing that whatever slight misunderstanding may have arisen between the two countries in the past, that misunderstanding has now been happily settled, would not be the most favourable to go back upon these questions, and to open up the discussions which have now been brought to a happy and successful termination, and thereby accomplish what, it occurred to me, was the object of the speech of the hon. Member for Eye—namely, to widen again whatever unfortunate difference may have existed between the two countries. On certain

points the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), I think, gave a very remarkable proof of how entirely animated he is on these questions by Party; because, having devoted nearly the whole of his speech to an elaborate argument to show the importance of the friendship and goodwill of Germany, he, towards the end of his speech, alluded to the statements that have recently been made to Parliament with regard to the removal of this unfortunate misunderstanding, and in connection with that he alluded to the question of the Cameroons and the settlement which has been reported in certain newspapers on the authority of a telegram from Berlin. When he came to the question of the Cameroons, and the reported settlement, he turned round and began to accuse the Government of a surrender of valuable British interests to the Germans, although he had immediately before been telling us that we had committed the very greatest folly on the Coast of Africa in not doing everything we could to welcome German extension and German Colonization. What struck me also as inconsistent in the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr Gorst) was, that he said that anybody reading these Papers would be led to suppose we had almost entered into a conspiracy with Prince Bismarck, he having previously been showing how lamentably indifferent we had been to the friendship and goodwill of Prince Bismarck. I do not understand how, at one and the same time, you can enter into a conspiracy with Prince Bismarck, directed, as the hon. and learned Gentleman Mr. Gorst thought, against our own Colonies, and also show complete indifference to the friendship and goodwill with the person with whom you are entering into a conspiracy. That appeared to me to be a great inconsistency on the part of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham. Then, again, he touched upon the question of the despatch of the 5th of May, and also of the Memorandum which was said to have been delivered to Earl Granville at an early date last year; and he really appeared to me to trench rather closely upon what may be called the courtesies of debate which exist, not only among Members of this House, but between Members of this House and those who sit in "another place;" because I may remind the Committee that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Earl Granville) has quite recently made a very clear statement in regard to these questions, which has been accepted by persons of all Parties in this country and in foreign lands. The hon. and learned Member (Mr. Gorst appeared to me, by the manner in which he chose his words, rather to impute, or cast some doubt upon, the accuracy of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs' statement.

MR. GORST: I am sure the noble Lord will allow me to say that, whatever my manner may have been, it was very far indeed from my intention to cast any doubt upon a statement of Earl Granville.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I, of course, accept the hon. and learned Gentleman's disclaimer; but my hon. and learned Friend was certainly understood by many in the House to be aiming his argument to the statement made by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and if he was not, I really do not understand what the point of his observations was, because, if he accepted the statement recorded in this Blue Book, and repeated in "another place" by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and by myself in this House, he must know that the despatch of the 5th of May was never received at the Foreign Office, and that the Memorandum was never given to Earl Granville by Count Munster. If he accepts that statement, I do not understand what the aim of the exordium of his speech was. The hon. and learned Member also alluded to the question of Angra Pequena, and the question of the Cameroons. I really do not understand whether he desires to re-open the question of Angra Pequena; at one moment I thought he did. He alluded to an assertion, an entirely unfounded one, that we had desired to shut up the Germans within a narrow strip of land along the coast; and then he proceeded from that to point to the Cameroons, and he said we had proceeded there on an ungenerous policy with regard to the Germans; that we had desired to hem them in; and in that manner had excited the ill will of the German Government. I may state that such an idea, if it exists in the mind of my hon. and learned Friend, is an en-

tirely mistaken one. The Government have had no wish whatever to shut the Germans in to a narrow strip of land along the coast; on the contrary, the Government were perfectly willing that, in the future, the German Colonists should be free to penetrate into the interior, and no doubt, as time goes on, they will do so; and if in those regions, which no doubt are inhospitable, German Colonization developes a thriving civilization, as it has in other parts of the world, no one will rejoice more than Her Majesty's Government. I repeat the words of the Prime Minister in Scotland—I quote from memory—"There is plenty of room in this great world for English Colonists and German Colonists." It is a matter of fact known to everybody who has given any attention to the history of Colonization, almost everywhere in the world, and especially in America, where English and German Colonists have found themselves neighbours, that they have been on the most friendly terms. But, Sir, with regard to the Cameroons. I was astonished that the hon. and learned Gentleman, considering the many minute points he raised in the course of his speech, did not notice, in the Blue Book presented in regard to the Cameroons, that there was a despatch that clearly showed the goodwill of Her Majesty's Government to the German Colonists in that part of the world. It is the Despatch, No. 57, of the 23rd of October, in which it is recorded that Her Majesty's Government would be glad to see an extension of the German Settlement in the South until they touched the Northern limits of the French Settlements in the direction of the Gaboon. If Her Majesty's Government had been so anxious to hem in the Germans, certainly that despatch would never have been sent; that despatch is in itself a proof of the goodwill of Her Majesty's Government to the German Colonists; and if since then we have found it advisable, and I may say, speaking generally, we have found it advisable, to carry that principle further, and to recognize that the Germans are quite within their rights in extending themselves, I assert that in this case we are simply giving further proof of what is already on record in this Blue Book. Then, Sir, the hon. and learned Member alluded to the question of Samoa, and he returned to a charge in regard to a matter which he asked me some Questions about the other day, and as to which I had hoped to find I had satisfied him. I referred him then to the Colonial Office Blue Books on the subject, Blue Books which were issued some time ago, and which contained many Foreign Office despatches as well as Colonial Office despatches. Notwithstanding the explanation which I then gave him, the hon. and learned Gentleman again asserted to-night that there was nothing binding on the German Government in regard to the pledges given, or asserted by me to have been given, in reference to the respect to be shown by both Governments—the English and German Governments—as to the independence of Samoa. [Mr. Gorst: I said there was no document.] I explained the other day there was no Treaty or Convention; I used both words advisedly, because I was quite aware there was no Treaty or Convention. There are two Treaties in existence, one between Great Britain and Samoa, and the other between Germany and Samoa; but there is no Treaty or Convention drawn up between England and Germany with respect to Samoa. There is, however, in the Blue Book, on page 145, a note of Count Münster to Earl Granville, and the reply, which is to be found on page 163, under date February 16th. There are on record, therefore, these two Papers, and in the despatch of Count Münster, on page 145, there is a clear recognition by the Germans of the independence of Samoa. Referring to the Treaty which was reported to have been concluded by a certain German official with the King of Samoa, Count Münster speaks as follows:—

"This Treaty will not be ratified so far as the stipulations do not harmonize with the explanations previously exchanged between Germany and England with regard to the maintenance of the independence of Samoa."

And then Count Münster goes on to say—

"While the undersigned has the honour of inclosing for the information of Her Majesty's Government the annexed German translation of the agreement, he expresses the hope of his Government that the Royal British Government will be convinced that the points agreed upon are within the limits of the German Treaty with Samoa, and encroach neither on the independence of this group of Islands nor on the rights acquired there by other nations."

Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice

When the Ambassador of a friendly country speaks, as Count Münster in his note does, of the maintenance of the independence of Samoa as being recognized by both Governments no one can say, although there is no Treaty or Convention, that there is no document between the two Governments in which the independence of the Islands was recognized. I am persuaded that the hon. and learned Gentleman Mr. Goschen has not observed that despatch in the Blue Book. The hon. Member who addressed the Committee a few minutes ago—the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow)—touched briefly upon Colonial questions also, and I may say, in reply to him and to the other hon. Members who wanted to know why we had published the conversations of Mr. Meade, it is well known to the House that the German White Book gave an account of the conversation. I am not going to make any attack upon the German White Book; but it contained a certain account of the conversations, and we thought it was desirable, and I am sure the Committee will feel we were right, that this country should have our record of the conversation also; that Mr. Meade should be allowed to tell his own story; and that hon. Members should have an opportunity of judging, from an account in his own language, of what was said and done, and not merely in the shape in which it appeared in the German White Book. But, Sir, the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) only touched very briefly upon Colonial questions; he rose to dwell upon those topics with which he is specially familiar, and on which his Indian experience naturally gives him a right to address the House. He again appealed to us to say something about the question of Afghanistan. Well, I am very sorry indeed to have to refuse information; it is always a very disagreeable thing to have to do so; but it is very often a melancholy duty. There are moments when we cannot make statements; and the Prime Minister has stated—and I think the country has fully endorsed his view—that this moment is not a proper one for making any declaration with regard to what is going on on the Afghan Frontier.

MR. ONSLOW: What I asked the noble Lord was, how it was that Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission had been sent to Afghanistan, and that no Russian Commissioner was there to meet him; how it was that all the details of the matter were not arranged before our Commissioners went out?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I enter no complaint to the question; it is perfectly natural for an hon. Gentleman who desires information on the point to put such a question; but the reply I would have to give would relate to the whole transaction; and I must, therefore, ask the Committee to curb their impatience, and allow us, when we make our statement, to make a full statement of the transactions from the very beginning. I believe that, from a British point of view, our statement with regard to the point raised by the hon. Member will be considered satisfactory. I must decline, however, at present to go into details. The hon. Gentleman raised a point with regard to the expenses of Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission. He asked me how the expenses are going to be borne. I have only to reply that this is an Indian charge, but that Mr. Stephen and his Secretary are in the employ of the Foreign Office, and therefore their expenses are put down as part of this Vote. That is the exception to my answer which proves the rule—namely, as I said the other day, that the expenses of this Commission are to be borne by India. Then the hon. Member also made a point with regard to the Earl of Northbrook's Mission, and wanted to know what *quid pro quo* there was for the expenses of the noble Earl's Mission. All I can say is that when the documents are published with reference to the Egyptian financial proposals, it will be found that they contain large extracts, as I informed the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Goschen) the other day, from the Report of the Earl of Northbrook, and it will also be found that many of the financial proposals made to the European Powers were made partly in consequence of his recommendations. At the same time, I may add that the Earl of Northbrook's inquiries, and his subsequent advice and counsel to the Government, were most valuable; and we believe that the expenses which were incurred by the noble Earl during his Mission have been fully met by the advantage of that advice and that counsel. These are the principal considerations which

I have to lay before the Committee upon this Vote. My hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) no doubt will enter more fully into those parts of the questions relating to Angra Pequena and the South Sea Islands, and the relations between the Mother Country and the Colonies which are involved. I can only say that in my opinion these Blue Books and Parliamentary Papers show that Her Majesty's Government have been actuated by an earnest desire to consult the wishes of the Colonies. It is in every sense one of the most gratifying experiences of the age in which we live that there is a good feeling between the Mother Country and the Colonies; and Her Majesty's Government are fully sensible of the importance of strengthening in every direction the ties which spring from that good feeling. I deny that the Blue Books show that there has been any neglect on the part of Her Majesty's Government. I may remind the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) that, in proof of what I am just now saying, it was the desire of the Colonial Office to consult the Cape Colony which to a great extent led to the unfortunate misunderstanding which arose with Germany about Angra Pequena. The charge made by the German Government against our Government was based upon the delay which occurred. The reply of Her Majesty's Government was and is that that delay simply represented the time during which the Colonial Office and the Cape Government were communicating with one another. If we had hurried the Cape Government in the matter it is very probable we would have been exposed to the opposite attack; we should no doubt have been told that we had been trying to force the hand of the Colonial Government, and that we had not given them proper time in which to reply. The Colony at that time was undergoing a change of Ministry, and there was an unavoidable delay. Her Majesty's Government were fully sensible that it would have ill become them to have attempted to compel the Colonial Government to give a reply before it was in a position to do so. I am fully justified, I think, in quoting that to show that in all these matters Her Majesty's Government have been most anxious to consult the Colonies. Sir, I have simply, with these observations, to recommend this Vote to the Committee, and to assure them once more that there is on the part of Her Majesty's Government a full knowledge of the great importance of the friendship of Germany to this country, and that we believe that whatever misunderstanding may have arisen during the past few months it was a misunderstanding only. On the part of Her Majesty's Government there is nothing except an anxious desire to meet the views of the German Government, and we fully believe that our good feeling is reciprocated by the Government of that great Empire.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, the reply of the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was scanty and unsatisfactory. The noble Lord had said that it was not a convenient opportunity to bring up questions of this kind on a Vote of Supply; but when the Committee recollected that the private Member's nights had been entirely appropriated by the Government he was persuaded the Committee would feel that hon. Members were justified in seizing any opportunity which presented itself of bringing forward questions upon which they took a deep interest. The noble Lord was very severe upon the hon. Gentleman the Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett). The noble Lord's sarcasm, however, was not of a high order; and he was persuaded that if the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) had been present he would not have suffered much pain from the comments of the noble Lord. He (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) was happy to find that the noble Lord denied all indifference to the good feeling of Germany. The dissensions he said between this country and Germany had entirely passed away, and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) was actuated by Party feeling in bringing them up again. There were, however, one or two points upon which the noble Lord had been very deficient in his explanations. He, of course, accepted implicitly everything that was stated by the noble Lord, or by his Chief in "another place" (Lord Granville); but, at the same time, although Lord Granville disavowed having received the Memorandum or despatch of

the 5th of May there was no doubt that Prince Bismarck was under the impression that the contents of those documents had been communicated to Earl Granville. He Sir H Drummond Wolff could not help thinking that if the documents were communicated to Lord Granville the noble Earl had failed to appreciate their language. The noble Lord said that no Memorandum or despatch was communicated to Lord Granville; but Prince Bismarck said that they were communicated to him.

Mr GLADSTONE: That has nothing to do with the question.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: The right hon Gentleman was very impatient of interruption himself, and he thought he might have some little consideration when others were speaking It had a great deal to do with the question, because a great deal of the difference between Germany and this country was owing to that circumstance. He thought it could not be denied that the despatches were communicated to Lord Granville; but the noble Earl seemed to have shown a great deal of obtuseness in this matter, which was not usual in him. The noble Lord Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice said that nothing was communicated; but did he deny that Lord Granville had communications with the diplomatists at Berlin? What did Sir Edward Malet write? On the 24th of January, 1885, writing to Earl Granville, he said that Prince Bismarck had shown him a despatch of the 5th of May last, which he had addressed to Count Munster, and which was a very remarkable one. It stated the great importance which the Prince attached to the Colonial question, and also to the friendship of Germany and England. Sir Edward Malet stated that the despatch was a long one, and that the Prince read it to him in German It contained a passage to the effect that Prince Bismarck had instructed Count Munster to say that if the arrangement could not be effected the result would be that Germany would seek from France what she failed to get from England And Prince Bismarck went on to say that not being satisfied with the result, and attributing it in part to the Ambassador not having stated the points with precision, he had sent his son, Count Herbert Bismarck, to England, in the hope that he might succeed where Count Munster had failed, but that he only succeeded in obtaining general friendly assurances of goodwill, which were of little value in the face of subsequent occurrences. It appeared, therefore, that it was distinctly stated by Prince Bismarck that Count Munster had given the gist of the despatch to Lord Granville That was a distinct statement on the part of Prince Bismarck. Lord Edmond FITZMAURICE: No, no! If the noble Lord wanted him to read it again he would do so; he would read the whole despatch if he liked. The hon. Member again read from the despatch of Sir Edward Malet, and said that the Prime Minister, after hearing it, had the face to contradict him.

Mr GLADSTONE: It is rather a strong measure to say that I have the face to contradict in a matter where I did not contradict or interfere in the slightest degree.

Sir H DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he, of course, accepted the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, and regretted that he had used the expression to which he had taken exception. He desired now to refer to another question. It appeared to him that the whole communication between Mr Meade and Prince Bismarck was of a most extraordinary character, and perfectly unprecedented in diplomatic history. This country had a Minister at Berlin, and there was a German Ambassador in England Mr. Meade, a gentleman of whom he could only speak in the highest terms, had gone to Berlin as a delegate on the Congo Conference. As hon. Members were all aware, Mr. Meade had been for a long time in intimate communication with Lord Granville and with the Colonial Office; and Mr. Meade, on his own hook, so to speak, went to the German Foreign Office and made a distribution of the countries of the world. Mr. Meade, overlooking the Ambassadors, without, as he said, instructions from the Foreign Office, went first to Dr. Busch, and from him to Prince Bismark, and others, and of his own initiative presented to Prince Bismarck a project under which England, France, and Germany were to divide amongst themselves the unoccupied territories of the Pacific This was a most extraordinary proceeding on the part of Mr Meade, because he offered not only territory to Germany, but to France, territories which England had entered into an ar-

rangement should not be given to France. Mr. Meade showed the greatest inconsistencies in his statements. Writing from the Hotel Royal, Berlin, on the 10th of February, he said—

"There seems to be some not unnatural misapprehension in England, and consequently, I fear, in the Colonies, as to my observations in regard to the New Hebrides; and I should like to explain that my reference to those Islands was solely intended to show that Germany and England are not the only Powers interested in the South Seas. The questions between England and France respecting this particular group were our own concern; and I, therefore, merely mentioned the subject, without going into the details of what we should require from France as an equivalent for the withdrawal of the understanding as to the independence of the New Hebrides."

Now, what was it Mr. Meade really said? In order to carry out his explanation he gave his original words. Mr. Meade, in a letter to Lord Granville, dated December 13, wrote—

"I pointed out that this would give Germany perfect freedom to develop their commercial enterprize in Samoa should the German Parliament make the necessary appropriation. France to be allowed to take the New Hebrides group, which lie away from the others, and would naturally fall into the New Caledonian system."

The New Caledonian system! What was that system? It was a system of penal servitude; it was a system of depredation by convicts in those parts which had given rise to angry Correspondence between this country and France. Entirely ignoring the horror which the British Colonies had of any penal settlement being near them, Mr. Meade had actually proposed that, on certain conditions, the New Hebrides group should be handed over to France, by whom they would be made into a penal Colony. He should like the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies to give an explanation of this matter; because what was the meaning of the phrase, "falling naturally into the New Caledonian system," if the New Hebrides were not to be supplementary to New Caledonia? The noble Lord (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had in a very innocent way disposed of the allegations of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) and the hon. Member for Guilford (Mr. Onslow). But was there no public document with regard to the partitioning of these unoccupied Islands? There was no despatch to Mr. Meade; there was no communication either with him or with Prince Bismarck with regard to the offer to the German Government; and, instead of disavowing the proposal of Mr. Meade, all that the Government did was to decorate him. By decorating him at that moment, the only result would be that, both in the Colonies and Germany, the act would be taken in this sense—that the Government had not repudiated the proposals, and that, although they had not sanctioned them, they did not consider them impossible. There was another point upon which the noble Lord had laboured a great deal, but without success, and that was with regard to Samoa. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) had asked the Government on several occasions whether they had any assurance in writing from the German Government that they did not intend to interfere with the independence of Samoa. The only answer which had hitherto been given by the noble Lord had been references to despatches written by Lord Granville to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin referring to reports of conversations; and now the noble Lord came forward with a document. The noble Lord since he had occupied the position which he then filled had obtained a considerable amount of self-complacency; and he (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) did not think there was any more signal instance of that than in the quotation of this particular document. The noble Lord said there were Conventions between Germany, and England, and Samoa, but that there was no direct Convention between England and Germany. He did not want to convict the noble Lord of an inaccuracy; but there was nothing about explanations having been previously exchanged in the despatch from Count Münster to Lord Granville, in which he talked about the maintenance of the independence of Samoa. The sentence in the letter written by Count Münster was as follows:—

"The note which the Royal British Ambassador at Berlin addressed on the 17th instant to the Imperial Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs with regard to New Guinea concludes with the information that the British Government has recently received Reports concerning the conclusion of a Treaty between the Representatives of Germany and the Chief of Samoa, and pre-supposes that this Treaty will not be ratified so far as the stipulations do not harmo-

nise with the explanations previously exchanged between Germany and England with regard to the maintenance of the independence of Samoa."

Where did they see anything about explanations previously exchanged? There was not one word about them from Germany; the only explanations were furnished by our own officials. The only paragraph in which the word "independence" occurred was in a German despatch from Count Munster to Lord Granville, which said—

"While the undersigned has the honour of inclosing for the information of Her Majesty's Government the annexed German translation of this agreement, he expresses the hope of his Government that the Royal British Government will be convinced that the points agreed upon are within the limits of the German Treaty with Samoa, and encroach neither on the independence of this group of Islands nor on the rights acquired there by other nations."

There was not one word about encroaching on Samoa, and when Lord Granville answered Count Munster he said—

"He did not take that as any guarantee of the independence of Samoa."

but he went on to say in the despatch to Count Munster of the 16th of February—

"It will not be possible for Her Majesty's Government to accept a position of less influence and consideration than is given to Germany by the agreement under discussion. If, therefore, it should be ratified by the Imperial Government in all its essential points, it may become necessary for Her Majesty's Government to call on the Samoa Government to enter into a precisely similar agreement for the benefit of British subjects, in order to secure the most favoured nation treatment, guaranteed to this country by Article 2 of the British Treaty with Samoa of August 29, 1879."

There was, therefore, no guarantee of the independence of Samoa. All they had got from Germany was a copy of an agreement which gave Germany certain powers; and so little did they look upon that as any guarantee of the independence of Samoa from Germany that they said they must obtain from Samoa the same guarantee for themselves. He challenged the noble Lord to produce any document in which the independence of Samoa was guaranteed by the German Government. Having touched on these points he was quite ready to go to a division; and if the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Buchanan) would tell him on what they were to divide he should be very much obliged to him. He merely wished to point out that Mr. Meade's communications with the German Government were of the most unheard of and dangerous character, and they seemed to have sprung altogether from that spirit of concealment and reticence which the Government had on all occasions shown in the House. In the case of Egypt, it was that concealment and reticence which had drifted them into the terrible position in which they were at that moment, and which he hoped might not drift the country into similar complications with Russia. But, at the same time, he protested against an official being allowed to go to Berlin, and without authority, in the most liberal spirit, to dispose of territory in different parts of the world to Germany or any other Power; and he trusted the Committee would receive from a Member of the Government some repudiation of the proposals made by Mr. Meade, and especially with regard to the point of the occupation by France of the New Hebrides as a penal settlement.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, that in all that had fallen from hon. Members opposite on this Vote he thought there were only two points which concerned the Colonial Office on which he was bound to speak. The first was the last question raised by the hon. Member who had just sat down, with regard to Mr Meade's communications, and the publication of the Correspondence, with regard to which he must say that these Papers were laid upon the Table of the House simply because of the publication in a German White Book of some portion of the Correspondence. Mr. Meade went to Berlin to attend the Conference there, and being a gentleman of very large acquaintance with Colonial matters—geographical and political— and having made the acquaintance of Dr. Busch, came into communication with him on these questions in an unofficial manner. What was their astonishment to see the bulk of that conversation published in a German White Book. Upon this it became necessary to publish the whole story as an antidote for what had been so published. The hon Gentleman laid hold of the passage in which Mr. Meade proposed in certain contingencies that the New Hebrides should fall to France, and in which he said they would naturally come

into the New Caledonian system. He could hardly believe his hon. Friend had really misunderstood the meaning of that term; he rather thought he intended to make a pun on the words. As a matter of fact, the words were used in the same sense as one would use them when he spoke of the planetary, railway, or any other system. Of course, what was meant was that geographically the New Hebrides belonged to the system of Islands of which New Caledonia was the principal, and stood in the same relation to them as Tahiti did to the Society Islands. And when Mr. Meade spoke in that way of the New Hebrides, he knew perfectly well that no such proposition as that which the hon. Member had supposed would be entertained, without consultation with the Australian Colonies, and without conditions absolutely satisfactory to their Governments were secured. Without dwelling on freedom of trade, and matters of that kind, he need not say that this country would never be a party to the handing over of the New Hebrides to France, unless there was absolute security against their being made into a penal settlement. This also was the answer of the Government to the remarks of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) upon the same subject. And that brought him to the only other point upon which he had to speak—namely, the observation which fell from the hon. and learned Member for Chatham that Her Majesty's Government withheld information from the Colonies. If he were to allow that to pass without notice, it might be supposed that the Government had been guilty of withholding information from them. During the whole time he had been at the Colonial Office, and during the whole course of the transactions about New Guinea, the Government had never kept back any information from the Colonies. The Agents General of the Colonies were in constant communication with the Secretary of State. The Government could not always do what they were asked to do; but they certainly gave them all the information they possessed. Last October, when he was asked whether there was any arrangement that Germany should take possession of the Northern part of New Guinea, he answered "No," and that was the result of the whole information possessed by the Foreign Office and the Colonial Office at the time. Finally, he wished to repeat his assertion most positively that they assisted the Colonies by giving them all the information they possessed—there was no system of keeping back from them the terms of any arrangement they proposed to make or any information whatever.

MR. TOMLINSON said, there was a point which he thought properly arose on this Vote. He did not propose to go into the question of the Congo Treaty itself, but only to refer to some points in the negotiations which had taken place at Berlin. It was not the time then to go into the general question, because the whole of the Papers had not yet been laid on the Table of the House. The question he desired to raise was this—"How far had Her Majesty's Government kept the promises made to the House before these negotiations commenced?" It would be in the memory of most hon. Members that on the 3rd of April, 1883, the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright) called attention to the apprehension he entertained that negotiations might be entered upon by Her Majesty's Government detrimental to the interests of this country, and that the discussion was closed by the Prime Minister, who said—

"I am quite ready, under the circumstances of the case, to engage . . . . that if we should make a Treaty that Treaty should be made known to Parliament before ratification in such a way, and with the intervention of such an interval, that Parliament shall be enabled to exercise an independent judgment upon it."—(3 *Hansard*, [277] 1325.)

And then he said further on—

"I need not explain what the effect is of an intervention of a deliberative Chamber upon an unratified Treaty. We have experienced it in very important cases ourselves from other States, the effect of which is to prevent the instrument ever taking legal effect as a portion of International Law."—[*Ibid.* 1326.]

Upon that statement of the right hon. Gentleman the hon. Member for Manchester withdrew his Resolution, as he said, relying on the promise that the Treaty would not be ratified until the House had ample opportunity for discussion. Some further discussion took place on this; and his hon. Friend the Member for Guildford, not deeming the assurance on that point quite sufficient, drew a further statement from the Prime Minister, who said that the pledge

he had given was well understood; and that if the Government availed themselves of the crowded state of Business for the purpose of escaping discussion they would be guilty of violating that pledge. Well, the Treaty was signed on the 26th of February, 1884. He wished to observe in passing that the Treaty did not contain anything in itself about the consent of the Parliament, either of this country or of Portugal, being required before its ratification. Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice: It was to be ratified. He was perfectly aware of that. He thought the noble Lord would see the cogency of his point when he came to it, which he would do as quickly as he could. The Treaty in terms required no confirmation by Parliament, or by the Cortes of Portugal, before it was ratified. But it concluded with a clause that it should be submitted for ratification as soon as possible. Time after time Questions had been asked in that House as to when it was to be submitted to the House; and it was not an unfair observation to say that if the Government had wished to have the Treaty discussed, they might have availed themselves of an opportunity afforded by a Motion put down by one of their constant supporters, because if it had been carried it would have supported the Government in the contentions they raised in the negotiations. But in answer to these Questions they only reiterated the promise made by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister during the previous Session. He came now to the point to which he wished to draw the attention of the Committee. Notwithstanding their avoidance of a discussion of the Treaty in Parliament, the Government, in their negotiations with the other Powers in Europe, endeavoured to obtain their consent to the views they had embodied in this Treaty. And in the despatch of Earl Granville to Baron Ampthill, dated the 26th of May (Africa, No. 7, 1884), the necessity for the approval of the Portuguese Cortes was put forward, while the rights of the British Parliament were ignored. This was shown by the following passage:—

"Your Excellency is aware that the Treaty with Portugal, which was signed on the 26th of February last, has not yet been ratified, and that the election of a new Cortes is now necessary, before which the Treaty will have to be placed for ratification."

And Earl Granville, in the despatch of the 30th of June to Baron Ampthill, argued in favour of extending the territorial jurisdiction of Portugal in the manner proposed by the Treaty. He said—

"I have to point out to His Highness that, but for the persistent opposition of the British Government unsupported by any other Power, Portugal would, in all probability, have long since established herself in the Congo district."

The despatch went on to endeavour to induce the German Government to adopt the Treaty made between Portugal and this country. And the negotiations were further continued on this footing. In the instructions given by Earl Granville to Sir Edward Malet (Africa, No. 8, 1884), he found the following—

"As Portugal, after having obtained the conditional assent of Great Britain to the recognition of her claims to the Coast from Ambri to the 5° 12′ S latitude."

He had therefore the fullest justification for saying that the Government, having promised to bring this Treaty for discussion before the House, sent their Representatives to the Conference at Berlin with their hands tied by the statement that Great Britain had given "conditional assent" to this Treaty. It was true that the House did not yet know what the results of the Conference at Berlin were; but it was clear from the Papers from which he had quoted that, but for the intervention of Prince Bismarck, this country would have been saddled with this Treaty with Portugal, which had never received the sanction of the House. It was hardly possible to acquit the Government of having committed a breach of faith with the House. The Government were in the dilemma of either having entered into negotiations with Foreign Powers, and of having tried to induce them to enter into a Treaty which they had promised to submit to the House, but had not so submitted, or of having concealed from foreign countries the fact that they had given that pledge to the House of Commons.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Tomlinson) is entirely mistaken in reference to the charge which he has thought fit to bring against the Government. It seems to be the impression of the hon. Member that Her Majesty's Government has given some unconditional pledge to lay this Congo Treaty before the House be-

fore it was entered into. No such pledge was ever asked for, or has ever been given. What was asked, and what was given, was a pledge, if it was a pledge, that before the ratification of the Treaty, if the ratification were contemplated, it would be brought before this House. The progress of investigation convinced the Government that the Treaty ought not to be ratified, and, consequently, the whole matter fell to the ground; and I believe my hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Jacob Bright) and other Gentlemen who took a great interest in the question were better pleased with the total disappearance of the Treaty from the region of existence into the region of nonentity than they would have been by a lengthened discussion in this House for no end or purpose whatever. Therefore, Sir, with regard to the supposition that the Government were induced to conceal that pledge from a Foreign Power, which is one of the horns of his dilemma, I think the hon. Member will see that as the pledge was made openly in this House, and is recorded in our Records, reported in our debates, and printed all over the world—I leave the hon. Gentleman to judge in his own mind whether there is any force whatever in that charge. Now, Sir, I can assure the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) that there was no intention on the part of my noble Friend (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) to censure him for having taken advantage of this opportunity. All my noble Friend stated was, that it was obvious that the discussion could not be entered into with perfect convenience. That, I think, is quite plain, if for no other reason, on account of the discontinuity in the attendance. I have seen the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) in his place sit out with great virtue and constancy this discussion from beginning to end; and he, with the official Gentlemen who occupy this Bench, are nearly the sole links between the beginning and the end of the debate. [Mr. WARTON: No, no!] I beg pardon. I am not going to impeach the hon. and learned Member for Bridport *sedet æternumque sedebit.* The hon. and learned Member is perfectly immaculate in the matter of attendance. I only spoke of those who contributed to the discussion; and I say that almost every contributor to the discussion, excepting the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, having made his contribution, has made his disappearance from the House. Now, Sir, the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) said one or two things that I cannot entirely allow to pass. In the first place, he has discovered that the Earl of Derby is a person of the most insignificant capacity, and that no such gentleman ought to be entrusted with the management of a Department of public affairs. Well, Sir, I may say that I recollect how for 20 years in this House I heard the Earl of Derby extolled to the skies for everything he did, and everything he did not do, by the other side of the House; and when I recollect that the Earl of Derby was never adversely criticized when he was a political opponent from this side of the House, I do not think that censure of this kind, coming so late in the day, will greatly affect the high character and reputation of the noble Earl. The hon. Member referred to the Report of the Earl of Northbrook, and I think he said there was a sum of £2,500 for his mission, and that the result of it was dear at the money. Well, what I would say is, let it remain until we have had our discussion on Egyptian Finance, and then we will be better able to judge whether or not that is fair criticism. The Colleagues of the Earl of Northbrook know very well the great benefit they have derived from the authoritative judgments which the Earl of Northbrook, from his visit to Egypt, has been able to form on many points of a difficult and complicated subject. I only ask the Committee to suspend its judgment until the discussion on these matters, and I think they will find that there is no ground for such criticism. I do not dwell on the case of Mr. Meade, further than to say that it is very gratifying to us to notice the just acknowledgment which the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) paid Mr. Meade for his public services. But I may observe that, if the slight mark of honour conferred upon him had been connected specially with this particular conversation at Berlin, of course it would have been conferred at the time of that conversation. That conversation took place three months ago. It is an acknowledgment of Mr. Meade's public services, but it has no relation to any particular act, and certainly not to

an act which was entirely unofficial. I need not quote the passages which mark it as unofficial. The hon. Member for Portsmouth says—"Why has it not been repudiated?" But it is not necessary to repudiate a conversation which has no official character, and which is embodied in a document which declares, both in the first paragraph and the last, that it has no official character whatever, and it appears in this book, inasmuch as it is deemed worthy of reference in a White Book published in a foreign country. Well, Sir, with regard to Germany much has been said; and there has been a good deal of censure and a good deal of controversial matter imported into the debate, which I think, upon the whole, there is no advantage in going back upon—as to how the case stands with regard to the despatch of the 5th of May How does the case stand in regard to that despatch? There is no doubt about it—it is perfectly well known, and has been placed on official record—that Prince Bismarck was under a mistake in his belief that the despatch had been communicated to Her Majesty's Government. For my own part, I will not depend upon my own memory, for it betrays me from time to time into error; but I remember that, upon hearing of that despatch, I immediately said to Earl Granville I could not believe my memory had so entirely and absolutely gone that I should not recollect such a despatch. Earl Granville said—"I am in the same position; I have no recollection of it." It is no wonder, because we have been in communication with the Representative of Germany on the subject, and it appears that it had never been communicated. I regret it, for at least I will say that, if it had been communicated to this country, it would have attracted all the attention, and it would have drawn all the friendly attention, which it would well have deserved. Now, Sir, with respect to the friendship with Germany, I stand behind no man in the value I attach to it. I said "no man," but I am not sure whether I ought not to make a single exception, and say that I am a little behind the hon. Gentleman the Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow), because he laid down deliberately this doctrine—that it was vain for this country to think of maintaining its position in Europe or the world without the friendship of Germany. I must say that I think the generous enthusiasm of the hon. Gentleman betrayed him into an error when he laid down such a proposition as that. Perhaps the statement slipped from him inadvertently. I am not prepared to admit that the friendship of any country in the world is necessary, or ever has been necessary, to enable our country to maintain its position. I will go to the fullest length with him in the value he attached to the friendship of Germany. I would say one word as to the particular subject which has led to that variety of correspondence which, I feel convinced, never would have taken place at all if only there had been that general introduction to the question of the desire of Germany to become a Colonizing Power, which Prince Bismarck evidently thought he had secured by the sending of this despatch, for there is no doubt he did believe that that despatch had been communicated to us, although it never was. With respect to the colonizing of Germany, there are two limitations which ought to be placed on all Colonization. One of them, of course, is that it should conform to the Law of Nations, avoiding all nominal and fictitious claims, and be of a *bonâ fide* character; then it must have regard to the prior rights acquired by other countries. Another limitation is dictated, not by the Law of Nations, but by the law of morality and justice, and that is, that it should be conducted with a full and due regard to the interests and rights of all aboriginal inhabitants. In our case, there is, I may say, another consideration, because we are bound to see that fair justice is done to the reasonable claims of our own Colonists already established in those regions, having been there for generations, and having founded communities which, it is not too much to say, will eventually be the dominant communities in time to come. But, subject to these limitations, what I hold is this—that it is for Germany to say how far it is her interest to become a Colonizing Power. With that we have nothing whatever to do; but, so far as we are concerned, we ought to meet her in no grudging spirit. We ought not to enter into the discussion of the question of the occupation of this or that spot by Germany, as if it were to be conducted in a huckstering temper, with a disposi-

tion to withhold everything that it is possible to withhold. In my opinion, it is the grossest error on our part in policy and in principle to allow any such humour to prevail. If Germany becomes a Colonizing Power, all I can say is "God speed her." She becomes our ally and partner in the execution of a great purpose of Providence for the benefit of mankind, and I hail her entrance upon that operation, and gladly shall I hope that she will become associated with us in carrying the light of civilization, and the blessings that depend thereon, among the more backward and, as yet, less significant regions of the world. Now, Sir, under all these circumstances, and in all places, that is the spirit in which, irrespective of this despatch or that, irrespective of this correspondence or that—that is the spirit in which we regard the tendency and the efforts of Germany towards establishing herself as a Colonizing Power, and towards sending forth her intelligent citizens, who have proved themselves in the United States to be among the very best emigrants in the world. In that work she will have our best and heartiest wishes, and every encouragement in our power.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR remarked, that the concluding words of the speech of the Prime Minister would meet with the hearty concurrence of Members in every part of the House. He only wished the Colonial Office had been animated by such a generous spirit in its dealings with Germany during the past year. The Prime Minister appeared to think that this was a very inconvenient occasion on which to bring forward these matters; but this was likely to be the only opportunity that the House would have during the whole Session of adequately discussing the Colonial policy of the Government. He must congratulate the Government on having got off so cheaply that night. No one would assert that the Colonial policy of the Government during the last eight months had been a glorious one for this country. It had been marked by all the vacillation and indecision, and more than the ordinary ridicule, that had attached to the policy of the Government in other parts of the world. Many hon. Members and right hon. Gentlemen had been absent that evening; and it was certainly to be regretted, not alone in the interest of the Conservative Party, that those who might have spoken the mind of the Party with authority had not been present. He hoped it was not too late even now for some contribution from the Front Opposition Bench. This debate had been most useful in this, if in no other respect—it had drawn from the Under Secretary an assurance that an adequate arrangement would be made to prevent the New Hebrides being turned into a penal settlement by the French.

MR. WARTON asked for some explanation of the item of £9,000 for outfits

"Payable through the changes consequent on the death of Lord Ampthill, the appointment of the Earl of Dufferin as the Viceroy of India, and the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Mexico."

A sum so large as £9,000 ought to have some explanation, and the more so that some time ago on a Diplomatic Vote the Committee received four or five different accounts from the Treasury Bench as to what had been done with regard to the Embassy House at Berlin. It was quite plain that under the lump sum paid in respect of the Berlin Embassy House there were some thousands of pounds concealed which ought to have been disclosed, and he was afraid there was something of the same sort being done in the matter of this £9,000. It was a perfect farce to have ridiculously small sums paraded while large sums were concealed. He should like to hear what sum had been spent through the changes consequent on the death of Lord Ampthill, what was spent on the appointment of the Earl of Dufferin as Viceroy, and what the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Mexico had cost?

BARON HENRY DE WORMS said, he only wished to make one observation, and it had reference to what had fallen from his hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Evelyn Ashley). The hon. Gentleman gave the Committee to understand that communications which passed between Mr. Meade and Prince Bismarck and Dr. Busch were of a strictly private and confidential nature. Particular stress was laid on the fact that they were of a private and confidential nature, and had no official character whatever. Referring to despatch No. 2, which was very properly called "Extract from a private letter

from Mr. Meade to Earl Granville," he found a remarkable paragraph. The writer stated he had not had time to make a copy of a Memorandum, and asked for the loan of Earl Granville's copy. That appeared to him to be the most remarkable specimen of a private communication that had ever been laid before the House of Commons. He hoped that before this conversation ended the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies would be able to explain the very peculiar nature of this public-private-official communication.

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY said, he did not understand his hon. Friend's point. Mr Meade's communications would naturally be sent to his Colleague.

SIR H DRUMMOND WOLFF said, there was one question he had to ask; and it was whether the Government absolutely repudiated any intention of offering the New Hebrides to France?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE rose to reply to the question put by the hon and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport Mr. Warton; the question was a very natural one indeed, and one which he fully expected would be asked in the course of the discussion. He had before now had occasion to explain to the Committee, on the ordinary Estimates for the Foreign Office, that the sum for outfits varied from year to year, and that, notwithstanding every effort that was made—he assured the Committee he had made every effort during the time he had been at the Foreign Office not to ask for Supplementary Votes—it was impossible, when the ordinary Estimates of the year were prepared, to foresee the exact sum which would be necessary for outfits. The present charge for outfits was almost entirely owing to the diplomatic changes consequent on the death of Lord Ampthill The principal item was that of £2,500 for Sir Edward Malet He did not think the Committee would wish him to read the list of items; but if the hon. and learned Gentleman Mr. Warton desired to see the list, he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) would be glad to furnish him with a copy The hon. and learned Gentleman, however, asked what part of the item was due to the re-establishment of relations with Mexico. The sum charged under that head was £340. To show how the charge for outfits varied from time to time, perhaps he might point out that, in 1881, the charge was only £290; but that, in the following year, when there were several changes in the Diplomatic Service, it was £13,261. In the ordinary Estimates of the year, which were already in the hands of hon. Members, he had taken the average; but, owing to this large sum for the present year, probably next year the amount expended would be small. He hoped his explanation would be satisfactory to the hon. and learned Gentleman Mr. Warton.

Vote *agreed to.*

3. £2,050, Colonies, Grants in Aid.

4. £6,200, South Africa and St. Helena

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

5. £17,000, Superannuations and Retired Allowances.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked how it came to pass that so large a sum as £6,000 was wanted in the Supplementary Estimates in connection with "Superannuations and Allowances, Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice." For a single Department the amount was so large that one was puzzled to imagine how the authorities could be so far out in their Estimates. It could only be excused on the ground that something unforeseen had occurred in the year, or that some great re-organization had taken place

MR. HIBBERT explained that the charge was entirely owing to the re-organization in the Pay Office.

MR ARTHUR ARNOLD said, there was a tendency to increase, which certainly ought to be repressed by those who were responsible for the Department He noticed that in 20 years the Vote for Superannuations and Retired Allowances had grown from £153,000 to £164,000. That was, in his opinion, a very extravagant increase

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that perhaps his hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert) would be good enough to explain the large item for Diplomatic Services—how it was that so large a sum as £4,000 could not have been foreseen in the Estimates which were voted last year?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the sum included the retiring allowances made to Sir Charles White,

Sir Henry Layard, and Mr. Harrison. There had been some uncertainty as to the sums to be paid, and a legal point was raised, especially in the case of Sir Henry Layard, and therefore it was not possible to foresee what would be paid. He could only repeat that he had made every effort to keep down the Supplementary Estimates of his Department.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he thought there should be some sort of examination into the law which at present governed diplomatic pensions. The noble Lord (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had just told them that one of the payments under this Vote was to Sir Henry Layard. It was perfectly true that for one or two years, a great many years ago, Sir Henry Layard was in the Diplomatic Service as an *attaché* to an Ambassador. For a long while he was a distinguished Member of the House of Commons, and because he had been an *attaché* and a Member of the House and an Under Secretary of State he was sent as Minister to Spain. Subsequently he was sent to Constantinople. Now, the law with regard to diplomatic pensions was that a person could only receive a pension after 15 years' service, and during 10 of those years he must have held a diplomatic position abroad. When Sir Henry Layard ceased to be Ambassador at Constantinople he had only served 10 years and three months, and he had to wait some years doing nothing, receiving no pension, until 15 years had elapsed from the time of his admission to the Diplomatic Service—that was when he first went to Spain. He (Mr. Labouchere) did not think pensions were intended for that sort of service—for paid service in the Diplomatic Corps. It might be said that diplomacy was a profession, and that the pensions were intended for those who had passed the greater part of their lives in it. Sir Henry Layard was to receive £1,700 per annum for having served as Ambassador for 10 years. Right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench served their country for much longer than 10 years without receiving, when they retired, a pension of £1,700 a-year. He did not think Sir Henry Layard was to blame, because, perhaps, anyone in the House would take a pension if he got the chance. Legally, Sir Henry Layard was entitled to take a pension, and he (Mr. Labouchere) never blamed anyone for taking what he was entitled to take. But he thought that an alteration should be made in the system, and that pensions should be limited to those who had devoted their lives to the Diplomatic Service, and not given to gentlemen who were pitchforked from the House of Commons into a diplomatic position for a few years only.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) objected to Sir Henry Layard having a pension, on the ground that that gentleman had not devoted the whole of his life to the Diplomatic Service; or, in other words, on the ground that, having been in the Diplomatic Service, and having then come into the House of Commons, he was put into an Embassy because he made himself disagreeable to the Government Department to which he belonged. The hon. Gentleman should recollect that some day he might find himself in the same position. It was, therefore, quite possible that if the hon. Gentleman opposed this Vote he might be cutting his own throat.

MR. W. H. SMITH wished to say a very few words in reference to the Chancery allowances which were included in the Vote. He understood his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) to say there had been a reorganization of the Paymaster's Office. He did not doubt that the re-organization was prompted by a sincere desire to promote the best interests of the Public Service; but he had had some experience of re-organizations, and he was bound to say they frequently disappointed the expectations of the persons who had made them. He trusted the Government and the Treasury would be extremely cautious how they entered into re-organizations which did not immediately effect a very considerable economy in the Service. No doubt there might be occasions when it was necessary to get rid of certain officers who stood in the way of great practical improvements; but there was a great deal to be said on both sides of the question. He was bound to say that re-organizations were not satisfactory which made considerable increases to the Pension Vote, and only temporary reductions of the Votes for the Effective Services. The Effective Votes had a tendency to increase in the

proportion in which it was assumed the efficiency of the Service was promoted, while the Pension Vote decreased very gradually indeed. He made no opposition to this Vote as it stood; but it did seem to him that re organization was a proceeding which required the greatest possible caution on the part of the Treasury.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) had not given any explanation of the last item of the Vote—namely, "grants made to certain Colonies."

MR. HIBBERT said, the item referred to by the hon. Gentleman represented a pension granted to a late Governor, the Marquess of Normanby, on the ground of advancing age.

Vote *agreed to.*

(6.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £890, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, in aid of the Local Cost of Maintenance of Pauper Lunatics in Ireland."

MR. W. J. CORBET noticed that this Vote was—

"To meet the case of a greater increase in the number of patients during the year than had been anticipated and provided for."

He would like to know whether the increase of insanity was real or not. The hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert), when he was Under Secretary of State for the Home Department, stated his opinion that the increase of insanity was real; but since then he (Mr. Corbet) found that the Commissioners had in their Report repeated the statement that had been made for so many years that the increase was only apparent resulting from the accumulation of chronic cases. He would like to draw the attention of the Committee to the figures. He found that in 1862 the number of insane persons in the United Kingdom was 55,527, and that in 1872 it was 77,013, and that in 1882 it was 98,871. He found that in 1884 the number had again increased to 103,660, an increase in two years of 4,589. The ratio of insane per 1,000 of the population, was, in 1862, 1·81; in 1872, 2·41; and in 1882, 2·84. Now, it was a very remarkable thing that the Commissioners of Lunacy should try and make it appear from their Report that insanity was not on the increase in the face of figures such as he had quoted. He did not desire to make any attack upon the public lunatic asylum system in Ireland; indeed, he only wished that there were none but public lunatic asylums, for he believed that the insane population were very much better provided for in those asylums than they were in private asylums. Owing to the vicious principle of deriving profit that pervaded the private lunatic asylum system, patients did not receive the same treatment or reap the same advantages as patients in public asylums. He would not enter further into the matter on that occasion; but he hoped to have some expression of opinion as to whether or not the increase which was minimized and made light of by the Commissioners was real or not.

MR. HIBBERT said, the Vote was one which belonged to the Department of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman); but as his hon. Friend (Mr. Corbet) had referred to him, and to a speech he made on this question, he must say that he held the opinion he expressed last year—namely, that there had been a considerable increase in lunacy in the United Kingdom, though some part of it might be accounted for in England by the fact that lunatics were now sent to county asylums from workhouses and other places. He did not think that there was the same ground for the increase in the other parts of the United Kingdom. The whole matter, however, could be discussed when the Bill, which was now being prepared, and which would shortly be introduced in the House of Lords, came before the House.

COLONEL COLTHURST desired to put a question to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) with respect to the position of pauper lunatics in the county of Cork. Insane persons arriving in Cork were sent to the asylum there, and they became for ever a charge on the rates of the county and City of Cork. In such cases in England, he understood, there would be the power to send the persons to the Unions or county to which they belonged, so

MR. SMALL wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had considered the question of the pay and superannuation of the lunacy attendants, and whether any improvement could be made in the position of those officers?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that he would look into that matter.

MR. DEASY said, he thought that after the observations which had been made by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for County Cork (Colonel Colthurst) with reference to the existing state of the law affecting lunatics in Ireland, it was clear that the law as it stood was very unjust to the people who contributed the bulk of the money for the maintenance of those lunatics. Every pauper lunatic in Cork Harbour or on any part of the coast of the County Cork, or that district, or of the district of the Cork Asylum, no matter where, was at once transferred to the Cork District Asylum, and charged on the rates of that district. He believed that a great part of the money which was now about to be voted went for the maintenance of such individuals. He trusted that the Government would soon introduce their Irish Bill, and would take into account the fact that both the ratepayers and the Government contributed largely to these lunatic asylums in Ireland, and that the present system of administering the money paid by the ratepayers and voted by Parliament was defective in many respects. There was another matter to which he wished to call attention. He believed that a considerable portion of this money was mis-spent very often, owing to the manner in which the Boards of Governors were constituted; and that was attributable, to a great extent, to the manner in which the Lord Lieutenant and his advisers had made the appointments to these Boards. A Governing Board had been created in Cork which met with the disapproval of everybody in that county and city. He should like to draw attention to some of the recent appointments. Some years ago an application was made to the then Lord Lieutenant asking that four or five members of the Cork Town Council should be appointed Governors of the district lunatic asylum. The Lord Lieutenant, in reply, wrote, asking them to nominate three gentlemen, and saying that he should be glad to appoint them. They nominated three gentlemen, one Conservative, one from the Whig Party in the Council, and one Representative of the Nationalists. These gentlemen were appointed, and about four months afterwards the Council unanimously decided on nominating another gentleman — Mr. Alderman Nagle—who had been a considerable time Chief Magistrate of the city, and who was one of the most experienced and able members of the Council. The then Lord Lieutenant refused to appoint this gentleman; but six or eight months after that the Council again determined to nominate him for the same position, and threatened that if he were not appointed they would refuse to present for the amount required by the Governors to carry on the institution. Under the influence of that threat His Excellency wrote a very conciliatory letter, and promised that he was very likely to see his way to meet their views. Ultimately he was appointed under that threat. When another vacancy occurred last summer another gentleman, who happened to be an Orangeman, a Conservative, and a Freemason, was nominated, and by return of post the Corporation received a letter from the Lord Lieutenant approving of his nomination, and assenting to it. That gentleman did not long enjoy the office, and another vacancy very soon occurred on the Board, and a Mr. John O'Brien was nominated by the Corporation from their own body. About three months ago his name was sent to Dublin Castle; but the Lord Lieutenant did not see his way to appoint him, because he differed from him in political matters. Mr. O'Brien was again nominated; but a second time the Lord Lieutenant refused to appoint him. And he (Mr. Deasy) was happy to say that the Corporation were now about to have recourse to the same tactics which they used before, and that they intended to refuse the supplies unless this very reasonable demand of theirs was complied with. The Lord Lieutenant pleaded in extenuation of his conduct that there were no vacancies on the Board; whereas, as a matter of fact, there were three, because two gentlemen had left the country and resigned their positions, and another was dead. There was a special

reason why Mr. O'Brien should be appointed, because the ratepayers had strong grounds for believing that jobs had been carried by the Board for the benefit of the political friends of the majority of the Board It had come under the notice of the Town Council that within the last six or eight months a considerable sum had been thrown away on one contract alone—the woollen contract; and Mr. O'Brien, who was largely in the woollen trade, had a special knowledge of that particular branch of business, and it was believed that he would be able to put an end to such things as had been going on for very many years. He (Mr. Deasy) trusted that some explanation would be given of the course which had been taken by His Excellency in the case of Mr. O'Brien. Whenever a gentleman representing the opposite political views to those of Mr. O'Brien had been nominated, the Lord Lieutenant had never hesitated for a moment about assenting to the appointment; but the moment a gentleman like Mr. O'Brien was named, His Excellency put down his foot and refused to allow the appointment to be made. He (Mr. Deasy) did not think that such a power was rightly exercised by persons like Earl Spencer, and he maintained that the ratepayers should be permitted to have a voice in the management of these establishments for the future It was a deplorable state of things that gentlemen of Mr. O'Brien's position in Cork, a Town Councillor, representing a very large constituency, and being one of the leading men of the city, should be denied the right to sit on such a Board, because the Lord Lieutenant for the time being did not agree with their political opinions. He did not think that such a line of action would at all tend——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I do not think the conduct of the Lord Lieutenant has anything to do with the Vote for the increase of these lunatics in Ireland. I have allowed the hon. Gentleman to go on for some time, because I thought he was going to connect his comments with the increase in the number of lunatics.

MR. SEXTON: May I submit to you, Sir, that the remarks of my hon. Friend are pertinent to the administration by the Boards of Governors of the money intrusted to them?

THE CHAIRMAN: In my opinion, the conduct of the Lord Lieutenant has nothing whatever to do with the Vote now before us. If the hon. Member wishes to raise any question of that kind, the proper time to do it will be when the main Vote comes under consideration. The present Vote is only for an increased cost, owing to the increased number of lunatics. It is certainly not in Order to complain of the conduct of the Lord Lieutenant on this particular Vote.

MR. DEASY would, of course, bow to the ruling of the Chair; but he had intended to show that part of the sum which they were now called upon to vote would be misapplied, owing to the fact that the proper men were not appointed upon the Governing Boards, to see the money properly administered. But as the Chairman had ruled him out of Order, he would not, of course, pursue this line of argument any further. As to one of the questions raised by the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Cork (Colonel Colthurst), there could be no doubt that if a proper classification were carried out in Ireland, Parliament would not be called upon to provide so large a sum annually as was now asked for on this account. Owing to the want of proper accommodation in the workhouses of Ireland, and to the fact that a great number of paupers who were really not dangerous lunatics, and for whom lunatic asylums were never intended, had to be accommodated in them, the sum asked for was much in excess of what it ought to be, and the county cess was burdened to an unfair and unjust extent. That was a state of things which should be promptly remedied. On the other hand if those poor people now in lunatic wards in workhouses could be treated differently, there might be some hope for them; but as matters stood at present, it was impossible for any of them to recover their reason, on account of their surroundings and to the want of proper provision being made for them. In fact, it was impossible for their mental condition to improve so long as they were confined to the narrow ill-ventilated and unhealthy wards of workhouses.

MR. KENNY wished to say a few words upon the Vote which was now before the Committee, and to call the attention of the Committee to certain

features in the management of the Cork Asylum and of the Clare Asylum. It was no wonder that the cost of maintaining asylums in Ireland greatly increased under the system of management adopted by the Boards of Governors, who seemed to take so much interest in the duties imposed upon them that he found, in the case of the Cork Asylum, that three or four of the Governors placed upon the Board had not condescended to attend even a single meeting of the Board in the course of a year. In fact, it was quite clear that the only popular person who had a seat upon the Board was the Mayor of Cork, and he was about the most regular attendant at the meetings. Among the names of the Governors was that of the Earl of Mount Cashel, who had not found it convenient to attend a single meeting, and that of the Earl of Bantry, who was in the same position, and that of Sir C. D. O. J. Norreys, who also had not attended a meeting. In fact, if he read out the whole list of names it would be found that, with the exception of one or two, none of them had attended to the duties with which they were charged. The only conclusion that could be arrived at from the registers of the Boards of Governors, was that the management of the lunatic asylums would become so defective that the cost which appeared in the Estimates would naturally become greater and greater every year. Looking at the case of the County Clare, he found that the number of meetings attended by the various members of the Boards of Governors was even less than in the case of Cork. He found that these self-nominated gentlemen, although they were not very great guns like those he had just named—there was no Earl of Bantry or Earl of Mount Cashel; they were only plain gentlemen, J.P.'s, and so on, or at the outside Deputy Lieutenants—were nearly all resident in the county, and yet they did not find it convenient to attend. He thought the system of intrusting the management of the lunatic asylums in Ireland to a body of irresponsible men who virtually took no interest whatsoever in the matters in which they were supposed to be concerned, was very scandalous, when one considered what ought to be the system of local government and local management. He found that recently the Board of Governors of the Ennis Asylum had under their attention the appointment of a resident medical superintendent. There were a great many candidates for that position, and amongst them were certain extremely well-qualified local candidates. The majority of the Board were in favour of a local candidate; but it appeared that the appointment of a resident medical superintendent to the Ennis Asylum rested with the Lord Lieutenant; and the consequence was, that in spite of the local feeling and of the feeling even of the Governors, a gentleman was brought from County Cork with no special claims. That gentleman had had some service in a lunatic asylum previously, but certainly no superior claims which would entitle him to a position among strangers upon whom he had no local claims whatever. This system of foisting candidates upon persons who did not require their services was a most objectionable one. Certainly, he did not envy the gentlemen who were appointed, because they were very likely to become lunatics themselves in the course of a few years. That had been the fate of a previous occupant of the office in the Ennis Asylum, and he did not envy the success of the present official in any way. However, if these appointments were to be made at all, they should be made in a spirit of fair play, and those who had local claims and personal qualifications which were undoubted, ought to be elected wherever they could be found. The gentleman who ought to have been selected for the Ennis Asylum had for two years at least been *locum tenens* for the previous holder of the office, owing to an attack of temporary insanity, which afterwards turned out to be permanent, with which that previous holder was afflicted. The gentleman he referred to discharged the duties while acting as *locum tenens* with entire satisfaction, and was a man of high character and of great ability; but he had been thrown over for a third or fourth rate man, who had been brought from a distance of 100 miles away and placed over an asylum which he knew nothing about and had no connection with. He hoped that the Chief Secretary, who was responsible, would be able to give some explanation of the matter, as to whether there was any good reason why a local gentleman of superior claims was passed over by the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland, and a stranger foisted upon the people of the locality.

MR CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, it was true that the local candidate had a great deal of local support, and he had not one word to say against him. No doubt, he was possessed of high qualities As a matter of fact, the gentleman in question was dispensing officer for two months, and he served as assistant resident medical superintendent temporarily since May 1883, and he believed that was the whole of his experience in this respect. The hon. Member had said something about the appointment of these officers being left at the mercy of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; but he would point out that that was a duty imposed upon the Lord Lieutenant by Statute. He could assure the Committee that no one would be more delighted than the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he were relieved of the responsibility of appointing persons to these important positions. The Lord Lieutenant, however, was responsible to the Government. With regard to the case of the Ennis Lunatic Asylum, the hon. Member seemed to think that the officer who had been appointed was a second or third rate man; but out of the almost innumerable candidates, Dr. Jocelyn was placed unhesitatingly first on the very long list of applicants for the post by the Medical Inspector of Lunatic Asylums; he was considered to be one of the first among assistant superintendents throughout Ireland. His experience was that he had been assistant resident medical officer for 14 years; whereas the experience of the other gentleman extended over about as many months, and he had not been in the regular service. Then he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) asked what would be thought of the conduct of a Government who, when a vacancy occurred, failed to give promotion to men who were perfectly well qualified? He could assure hon. Members that he had gone through the whole of the papers and seen the applications of the candidates, with the result that he believed no reasonable person could come to any other conclusion than that Dr. Jocelyn was the very best man for the position. It would have been, no doubt, a graceful act to have appointed the local candidate, against whom he had nothing to say; but, unfortunately, his testimonials, which related principally to knowledge of his personal qualities, could not be set against the experience and long service in the other case. That was the history of the appointment, which had been made after a long and careful consideration, and he believed that appointment had received the approbation of the existing Lunacy Administration in Ireland.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he thought that this Vote was one which could not but be regarded with dissatisfaction by anyone interested in the administration of the insane law in Ireland. What did he find? The Government asked for £890 for the maintenance of pauper lunatics in Ireland. It was for the maintenance of a greater number of lunatics than had been provided for in the original Estimate. He thought it was a serious matter when the Government found themselves compelled to apply for more money than was originally asked for. Hon. Members should bear in mind that this increase in the expenditure on account of pauper lunatics in Ireland was an increase which went on year by year, and it was not the first occasion upon which Irish Members had observed this increase. He had not been able to look to the figures for the last two or three years; but he believed he was justified in saying—indeed, he challenged contradiction—that the increase was steadily growing. Not only was the amount paid from the Imperial Treasury increasing, but it was also the case with the amount paid by the ratepayers of the country. He found that the total for the present year was £95,390; for 1883 it was £92,866. That was a very considerable difference, and one which well deserved the attention of the Committee. What made the increase more extraordinary was that it took place in a country in which the population was steadily decreasing; they had a decreasing population on the one hand, and an increasing expenditure for pauper lunatics on the other. That, he said, was a most alarming circumstance, and deserved the serious attention of the Committee, as well as a much more complete answer than had been given by the Chief Secretary. For his own part, he believed that the reason of this increase was bad management. They would not have been called upon for the £890 asked for if these lunatic

asylums were properly managed; and he submitted that the Chief Secretary was called upon to give some answer to the various points raised. He spoke with the authority of a person as familiar with the management of lunatic asylums as anyone in that House when he said that these Governing Bodies were almost entirely self-elected. A certain number of gentlemen, all belonging to a particular class of the population, when a vacancy occurred, sent to the Lord Lieutenant a recommendation of some person for the appointment. It was a system of Local Option, tempered with the sanction of the Lord Lieutenant. Would the right hon. Gentleman stand up in that House and justify this principle of self-elected Guardians, which largely accounted for the extraordinary increase of expenditure for the maintenance of pauper lunatics in the midst of a diminishing population? He wished to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he thought it becoming, in reference to this gross mismanagement by self-elected Governors, on the part of the Lord Lieutenant or himself, to bring his influence to bear to prevent anything like a mixture of the popular element with the body of self-elected Governors—was it decent on the part of himself or the Lord Lieutenant? ["Order!"] He did not wish to offend the Chief Secretary by any language of his own; but was it seemly on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who bore his share of the responsibility for these transactions, to interfere and prevent a popular Body from having one of its most trusted representatives serving as one of the Governing Body of the asylum? He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that this was a question on which the ratepayers of Ireland would make themselves heard before long. In 1883 the entire sum paid on account of Lunatic Asylums was £219,516 for pauper lunatics, and although £98,566 was paid from the Imperial Exchequer, the ratepayers paid £123,702 of the amount. That being so, he thought that the ratepayers had some reason to exercise very stringent control over an institution which cost them such an enormous sum of money. But what did he find now? He had not the exact figures in his possession; but he understood from an hon. Friend below him, who was intimately acquainted with the subject, that the ratepayers of Ireland, this year, in place of paying the enormous sum of £126,702, which was the amount in 1883, were now paying something like £130,000 for pauper lunatics. It was no wonder that they should be called upon to vote an additional sum like the present, when they saw increased expenditure going on at this gigantic rate. He asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to explain whether, in any legislation he might hereafter bring forward, he would include a radical and revolutionary change in the government of these asylums? There was evidently some such reform required in the government of these institutions, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he could stand up and justify the action of the Body which had refused to sanction the appointment of Mr. O'Brien? Was it to be tolerated that a body of representatives of the ratepayers at Cork should not have the right of appointing to the Governing Body of the lunatic asylum of the district a man accepted by them as a worthy mouthpiece? He was satisfied that any attempt in London or Edinburgh, or in any other part of the country of England or Scotland, to interfere in this way with the rights of the ratepayers, would not be tolerated for one moment.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN said, he had called Order during the speech of the hon. Member for Galway; but he begged to say that he had merely endeavoured to awaken a few hon. Members while the hon. Gentleman was addressing the Committee.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the hon. Member (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) expressed his surprise and indignation at the increase of the Vote for Pauper Lunatics, and he said that the Government and the Irish Administration had so mismanaged this Vote that they had now to ask for a large supplementary sum. He would point out, however, that the sum asked for was less than 1 per cent on the amount of the original Estimate. The Committee would be aware that in preparing the Estimates the actual number of inmates of lunatic asylums could only be guessed, and he did not think that the increase of 1 per cent was a charge with respect to which hon. Members need be tempted to use such strong lan-

guage. The hon. Member said that the whole of the increase was due to the mismanagement of the authorities; but the reason why the Vote had increased was that the number of lunatics had increased. It was a melancholy fact that there were many insane persons who were not registered as lunatics, and although the population of Ireland was diminishing, the number of lunatics in the asylums was on the increase. In 1875 the average number of persons in the asylums was 7,750, and the gross amount required under this Vote was £80,600; in 1882, the last year for which he had a Return, the average daily number was 9,170, and the amount required £95,868. The Committee would observe that there had been a steady increase in the number of lunatics, and although it was extraordinary, as the hon. Gentleman said, that there should be an increased charge with a diminishing population, that increased charge was due, nevertheless, to the increase of lunacy in the population; it was purely due to the increase of lunatics in the asylums. The hon. Member, in referring to the appointment to the Governing Body of Cork Lunatic Asylum, had spoken of the advantage of self-government. So far as that matter was concerned, he was entirely with the hon. Member; he wished that by some system of local self-government duties such as these could be thrown on the localities, and he trusted that it would not be long before some such system was introduced. In the meantime, however, they had to deal with things as they found them, and the duty was thrown by law on the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland of appointing Governors to these asylums. It had been said that the Lord Lieutenant had refused to appoint the gentleman referred to because he had refused to dine with him. If the hon. Member opposite thought that was the case, all he could say was that he should disabuse his mind of that idea. The truth was that the Corporation of Cork had by custom, but not by right, been in the habit of recommending Governors to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland for appointment. These persons had sometimes been accepted and sometimes not; but lately the Corporation had assumed a somewhat different attitude, and had claimed, not only the privilege of recommending according to the practice which had been followed hitherto, but they claimed the actual right of nomination. Now, the Lord Lieutenant was responsible under Statute, and he could not divest himself of his responsibility for the appointments. When Mr. O'Brien was recommended, after a good deal of discussion, certain men were sent up from Cork Town Council in connection with a vacancy which had occurred, and Earl Spencer came to the conclusion that there was a sufficient number of Governors already, and that, therefore, there was no necessity of filling the vacant place. Then it was said that the city interest was left imperfectly represented on the Board of Governors; but, according to the numbers, he found in the documents before him the city interest already preponderated on the Board. He thought that was an important point. In 1884, the County of Cork paid £7,953 towards the maintenance of asylums, and was represented by 15 Governors; and in the same year the City of Cork paid £2,695, and was represented by 22 Governors. He begged to assure the Committee that there had been no intention whatever to put any slight upon the Corporation; and there would be no desire, when it was necessary to appoint a Governor, not to take into the fullest consideration the expressed wishes of that Body.

Mr. DEASY said, as a matter of fact, the Corporation had only two representatives on the Board.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR said, this question with regard to pauper lunatics in Ireland was of great interest to the people. His hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Colthurst), who had laid this question before the Committee, had emphasized the fact that the Corporation of the City of Cork had taken into very serious account the manner of the administration of funds at the disposal of the Board; and he thought that, notwithstanding the statement of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, it had been clearly shown that the citizens of Cork had no fair representation upon that Board. So much had that been brought home to the people of Cork that investigations were instituted by the Corporation, which resulted in the discovery that a great deal of expense had been incurred by the acceptance of bad contracts, and that in this way the funds had been improperly administered. In

that state of things the Corporation of the City of Cork selected a certain man who was an expert in some articles dealt with by the Lunatic Board of the district asylum, and they had their suspicions that the Lord Lieutenant would not appoint him in consequence of his political opinions. The person selected was a man remarkable for his business capacity, and he had already served upon public Boards to the advantage of his fellow-citizens. The Lord Lieutenant did not appoint him. And why? Because he had lain for four months on a plank bed; because he had protested against laws which he believed to be more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Hon. Members on those Benches were entitled to ask on what grounds this man had been rejected. For the information of the Committee, he begged to state that the constant refusal of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to appoint men to public Boards in Ireland in cases of this kind only increased the discontent which existed with regard to the administration of these funds; that this discontent was extending itself upwards amongst business men in the country, and it was high time that the Government should take this matter into consideration with a view to remedy the evils complained of.

Mr. HEALY said, he thought the Committee would appreciate the way in which the Chief Secretary had given information to the Committee with regard to this Vote. They had a distinct conflict of evidence upon this point. The junior Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Deasy) said that the city had only two representatives on the Board. The right hon. Gentleman said there were 22. [Mr. Campbell-Bannerman: I said on the Corporation.] Their point was that when a member of the Board appointed by the Corporation died, the Corporation claimed the right to nominate. Who were the persons who represented the City of Cork on the Lunacy Board—who were the safeguarders of the money of the ratepayers? Why, here was one, the Earl of Mount Cashel, a gentleman of 90 years of age, who never thought of attending to the duties of the post. The Earl of Bantry was another—a gentleman at present engaged in hunting the kangaroo in Australia; and there were many others—J. P's and so on—not one of whom not only would not be appointed by the Corporation, but would not be appointed to the meanest office in the Municipality by anyone who had the interest of the Municipality at heart. The fact of the matter was this—that formerly, when a death or vacancy occurred amongst the Governors of the lunatic asylum, although there were more Governors then than there were at the present time, the Lord Lieutenant nominated a new one. Now, however, when a vacancy occurred, and when the Town Council of Cork for the first time for years proposed to exercise its right to nominate a Governor, the Lord Lieutenant made the flimsy excuse that there were too many Governors already. The Lord Lieutenant and the Government, who were responsible for this, were the people who would extend the franchise, who wished for popular representation, and who desired that the people should express their opinions. A Member of the Government that night had declared that the Government wished for some system of local self-government, and yet Her Majesty's Government would not allow the people of Cork so much local self-government as would contist in allowing the Town Council of Cork to nominate a Governor to the Cork Lunatic Asylum. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) said —"We have been anxious for years to give you a system of local self-government." Well, the Irish Members would put his sincerity to the test, and would say—"Give us as much local self-government as will enable us to nominate a Governor for a lunatic asylum and to secure his appointment—give us the power we have hitherto exercised." They were told that the Lord Lieutenant considered they were too full on the Board, and that they had enough Governors. Well, he presumed the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had a desire to obtain some amount of credit in his Office, although he was a Scotch official. The right hon. Gentleman must have some desire to please the masses of the people he was amongst. If he were sent to India, at any rate he would have that feeling with regard to the Hindoos. How could he tell them, without the merest pretence, that he was anxious to give them local self-government, when he refused to allow them the small privilege they were now asking for? Now, the Irish Members knew very well the

reason of the right hon. Gentleman's reluctance to agree to the present just demand. This reason was that Mr. J. O'Brien had got four months' imprisonment—that when the Government officials in Ireland were looking about for *mauvais sujets* and village ruffians, they had put this man, who was a Councillor of the city, and one of the most honest citizens of Cork, in gaol, and had given him four months' confinement for making a speech. They had punished this man for making a speech which was not by any means as violent as speeches they heard every day in that House. He (Mr. Healy) wished he could have a sovereign for every speech of a stronger character he had made in the House. The Government not being satisfied with having plank-bedded this gentleman, with having shaved his head and shaved his beard, and kept him on skilley for four months—this not being enough for them, they now refused to allow him to be appointed a Governor of a lunatic asylum. Before he (Mr. Healy) passed from this case, he would say that the best way for the Corporations of Ireland to bring the Lord Lieutenant and all Lord Lieutenants to their senses, was just to give them a taste of the quality of the Limerick Corporation. The Corporation of Cork paid thousands of pounds a-year for the keeping up of its lunatic asylum. Let them pay no more. If Earl Spencer, whilst pretending to desire to make the people loyal, insisted upon excluding them from the management of local institutions——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member that we are not engaged in a discussion as to the conduct of the Lord Lieutenant. The Vote is to provide for an increase of pauper lunatics, and this is not an occasion for reviewing the conduct of the Lord Lieutenant on this subject. If that matter is discussed at all, it must be discussed on the Main Question. This Vote is for an increase of pauper lunatics, and I cannot allow the debate to wander off into an attack upon the Lord Lieutenant.

MR. HEALY said, he had been misled into irrelevancy by imitating the example of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, to whom he had been replying. He should like to ask whether this asylum was the one with which Dr. Eames was connected? He had been intending to bring the case of that doctor forward. Dr. Eames was one of the gentlemen brought up to Dublin by the Government to give a professional Report upon the condition of Mr. James Ellis French. He had given a bogus Report, declaring that Mr. James Ellis French was weak in the understanding, weak in the hips, weak in the legs, and weak in every way, and that he was perfectly incompetent—that was to say, he was so incompetent that he was unable to plead to an indictment. This gentleman, together with Dr. Curtis and Dr. Gordon, had been brought in to declare that Mr. James Ellis French, now undergoing two years' imprisonment in Her Majesty's prison, was absolutely ruined in his faculties. If any of his (Mr. Healy's) hon. Friends were anxious to know how bad Mr. James Ellis French was in the opinion of this Dr. Eames, who was the doctor of the lunatic asylum in question, and a man through whose hands lunatic patients passed, they would find on inquiry that his view was that Mr. French was an idiot. That in itself was enough to show how this man Eames was fitted to be intrusted with the doctorship of a lunatic asylum. But there was another case connected with Dr. Eames, which was still more remarkable. The first case was that of a man who was said to be incapable of pleading, but who was afterwards found able to plead, had pleaded, had been found guilty, and was now undergoing two years' imprisonment. The other case had formed the subject of an action. It appeared that a man had been delivering milk to the asylum, and through some extraordinary hallucination Dr. Eames had shown himself to be not only a doctor in connection with the asylum, but a person to provide the asylum with inmates, for he had seized upon this unfortunate milkman, put him into a straight-jacket, and flung him into a dark cell, on the ground that he was mad. Dr. Eames had got out of this difficulty by paying £5 to the unfortunate man, who had brought an action against him for false imprisonment. Well, he (Mr. Healy) put it to the Committee whether this Dr. Eames was a man whom they ought to have at the head of a great lunatic asylum? On the one hand, he declared Mr. James Ellis French to be mad after it was shown that he was not so; and, on the other hand, he

seized an unfortunate milkman, whom he found on his rounds, and put him into a dark cell, on the ground that he was a lunatic. The sooner they had a fresh medium for the appointment of such men as these the better. He should have thought such a scandal as this would have at once attracted the attention of the Government. Unless they had a proper system of supervision over these institutions they would continue to have doctors of this kind. If the Cork Corporation were able to send to the Governing Body of the asylum Governors of proper calibre, who would see that the doctors they employed discharged their duties properly, scandals of this kind would be avoided; but so long as the Governing Body consisted of deadheads, such as the Earl of Mount Cashel, who never went near the place at all, they would have such officials as Dr. Eames. What worse scandal could there be than that of putting an innocent milkman in a straight-jacket and in a dark cell for hours, under the pretence that he was a lunatic, when, as a matter of fact, there was nothing the matter with him? With regard to James Ellis French's case, this was Dr. Eames's certificate, dated from the asylum—

"Lunatic Asylum, 20th April, 1884.—We, the undersigned, having been appointed by His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to examine and certify, for His Excellency's information, our opinion as to the present state of health of County Inspector James Ellis French, R.I.C., beg to report that, having visited that officer, we are of opinion that he is suffering from mental disease, softening of the brain, and great nervous debility, with impairment of bodily health; that from this infirmity of mind and body he is incapable of discharging the duties of his situation, and that such infirmity is likely to be permanent."

This Report was signed by Dr. Eames and by the other two doctors he had mentioned, and he contended that the man who said that this ruffianly County Inspector, who was now picking oakum and doing hard labour in Richmond Convict Prison, was of unsound mind, was the man in charge of the lunatics in Cork Asylum. The Lord Lieutenant did not want on Boards of Governors persons of an inquiring turn of mind. He would rather have Mount Cashells, aged 90, who never went down at all to see whether Alexander Eames was properly discharging his functions, or to see how the place was getting on. He and some other of the Irish Members had had, in their short experience, a course of three Chief Secretaries, and all of them in succession seemed to be determined to learn nothing from their Predecessors. The Irish Members had addressed many grievances to them, and had requested that they should give attention to these grievances; but, though they were appealed to in this way day after day and week after week, they never obtained redress. Did the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary think the Irish Members moved in these matters for their own amusement? If he did, he was sadly mistaken. The Irish Members could enjoy themselves much better elsewhere than by going through this process. But, be that as it might, the Irish Members had to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to give attention to these grievances, which were very galling and very grievous to them. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary meant to carry out his functions in an effective and thorough manner, he (Mr. Healy) would ask him not to be swayed by the information he got over from the Castle as to the Cork Lunatic Asylum having a sufficient number of Governors upon it. He would ask him to treat the matter in an impartial spirit, and to give due weight to what he heard from the Irish Members in the Committee. If he continued to act as his Predecessors had done, and to go from pitfall to pitfall, and from failure to failure, he would, at the end of his tenure of Office, whenever that might be, go out of it a wiser but a sadder man.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he thought that this matter was one of far greater importance than English and Scotch Members, from a general inception of it, might think. In this matter, which the Irish Members had brought up that night, was involved the question of self or local government. Her Majesty's Government, and he believed the Prime Minister himself, and he knew the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, had declared themselves in favour of local self-government in Ireland. Well, he believed that that would be doing a great deal towards satisfying the people of Ireland, and allaying the discontent which existed there, if they could be brought seriously to believe that the Government were in earnest in their protestations in favour of this local self-government. Up to this, however,

the Irish Members had absolutely nothing before them in support of the statement of the Government that they were in favour of local self-government except mere words. If the Irish Members could believe that the Government intended in the future to introduce some measure which would give to popular representatives complete control over all such institutions as lunatic asylums, they would gladly refrain from these criticisms. But they could not believe that Her Majesty's Government really did intend to do anything towards extending the power of the people of Ireland, unless they had something besides words before them. Here was a case in which the Government might, if they had liked, by a little fair and judicious action, have given to the people of Ireland abundant proof of the fact that they were desirous of extending local self-government to the Irish people, and how could the Irish Members be supposed to credit sentiments such as they had heard that night from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the effect that he was anxious to see the power of the people extended, and to see local self-government instituted in the country, when in the very same breath the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues refused to give proof of the earnestness which prompted them to make that statement? He knew that the discussion of matters like this must be very trying to hon. Members who represented English and Scotch constituencies. They knew very well that in bringing forward questions of this kind they laid themselves open to be viewed by a very considerable degree of prejudice by the people of this country and the Members of that House who represented English and Scotch constituencies; but when it was remembered that the Irish Members had absolutely no method of expressing grievances such as that with which they were now dealing, except by speaking on the floor of that House, he thought that even the most prejudiced amongst the English and Scotch Members would admit that they had some little right and were deserving at least of some consideration in bringing these matters forward. Of course, at that hour of the morning (1.25 A.M.) hon. Members would be glad to see such a discussion as this postponed; but if the Irish Members did not ventilate their grievances in connection with the treatment of these lunatic paupers that night, the Committee knew very well that they might not in this Parliament be able to secure another opportunity of doing it. Somebody or other had once said that an opportunity only came once in a lifetime. Well, it might be said that an opportunity only came once in the lifetime of a Session. The present was the opportunity of the Irish Members for expressing the particular grievance in connection with the lunatic asylums of Ireland, and the Irish Members would not be true to the interests of the people they represented if they did not avail themselves of that opportunity to its fullest extent. Hon. Members might feel uncomfortable at being kept up so late; but he would remind them that those who were presenting the case had to consider, besides their own comfort, and that of their Colleagues, the treatment of the unfortunate lunatics who looked to them, and to them alone, to ameliorate their condition. It would be hard for him to present the case which had been brought forward by the hon. Member for the County of Cork (Colonel Colthurst) in a new light. Several of his Colleagues had emphasized the case, setting forth the injustice imposed on the City of Cork by the refusal of His Excellency to appoint to a position of trust an eminent citizen who had won for himself the respect and the confidence of his fellow-citizens; but even at the risk of being considered guilty of tedious repetition, he Mr W. Redmond was bound to say, seriously and honestly, that he did not remember for many and many a day having heard such a flagrant instance of the violation of the rights of the people by the Government in Ireland than the action of the Lord Lieutenant in refusing this appointment of Mr. J. O'Brien. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would have them to believe that the Lord Lieutenant had not appointed Mr J. O'Brien, Town Councillor, upon the Governing Body of the asylum because he was not wanted. If the Asylum Board were at its full complement, the Irish Members would not consider so much the injustice of the refusal of the Lord Lieutenant to accept the nominee of the Corporation; but what made them feel doubly grieved in this matter—and to this he invited the special attention of

the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary—was that they knew very well that the appointment of Mr. O'Brien was refused by the Lord Lieutenant, not because of his unfitness for the post, not because he had not capacity for administering the affairs of the asylum in a proper manner, but because he was what might be called a personal enemy of Earl Spencer and of his rule in Ireland. The men who were anxious for Mr. O'Brien's appointment were Nationalists, and that was the secret of the thing. But who was the last man that the Lord Lieutenant had appointed to be one of the members of this Governing Board? Why, Mr. Barry Shehan, one of the most notorious anti-Nationalists in the whole of Cork, a man who was thrown out of the Mayoralty, and a man who could not claim to have anything like the confidence of the majority of the people of Cork. This gentleman had been appointed. Why? The reason was that every time a Royal Duke came down to Cork, and the citizens did not want to receive him, Mr. Barry Shehan was always there to crawl in the gutter and kiss the sacred foot of that Royal Duke or anyone else that might come there. This Mr. Barry Shehan was a servile supporter of Earl Spencer in all his acts—good, bad, or indifferent.

THE CHAIRMAN: Again I feel it necessary to remark that this is not an occasion upon which to attack the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The Vote before the Committee is to provide for an increase of pauper lunatics. The hon. Gentleman has developed his observations to a great extent, and I must really beg of him now to confine them to the Vote before the Committee.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said, the right hon. Gentleman would do him the justice to consider that in speaking that night he was not at all actuated by any desire either to transgress the Rules of the Committee, or to bring any adverse ruling unnecessarily upon his own head. If he had been led into transgressing the Rules of the Committee, he now asked the Committee to believe that it was wholly on account of the interest he felt in this case, and the desire he felt to put it as strongly as possible before the Committee. The point which he was endeavouring to put was that he considered the citizens of Cork had a perfect right to nominate, if not to elect, the men who should be upon the Asylums Board, and who should have the administration of the money which the Committee were now called upon to vote. It had already been pointed out to the Committee that the administrators of the Asylums Board were, to a man, not the representatives of the people, but the nominees of the Crown or the Crown's representatives. Now, the principle for which he contended was that this was public money. He and his hon. Friends would vote the money freely, because it was for the purpose of sustaining a necessary charitable and praiseworthy institution; and because it was for the purpose of maintaining an institution which was supposed to protect, but which he was afraid did not protect as well as it ought, those who had been deprived by the act of the Almighty of their senses. He and his hon. Friends acknowledged that this Vote was wanted; but while supporting it they did say, and he believed the majority of Englishmen and Scotchmen would endorse his statement, that it was only fair and just that where there was public money to be expended, that public money should be disbursed by people who were elected by the ratepayers, and who were responsible to the ratepayers. Now, the money that the Committee were going to vote, the money that had been voted, and, under the present system, all the money that would be voted, would be disbursed, not by the representatives of the people, but by a lot of decrepid, old noble Irish landlords, who had no sympathy with the people, and who had not got the confidence of the people, but who were only administrators of this Board simply because they had the favour of the Lord Lieutenant. The best proof of the truth of the statement that had been made that the Lord Lieutenant refused to appoint Mr. O'Brien because he was a Nationalist was to be found in the fact that he (Mr. W. Redmond) had endeavoured to press upon the attention of the Committee—namely, that the very last gentleman who was appointed by the Lord Lieutenant was a man who had been hissed in the streets of Cork. He (Mr. W. Redmond) was as anxious as any Member of the House to see peace and contentment reign throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain and Ireland. He had no desire to see the people of his country for ever distracted

and discontented; but sincerely did he say that as long as institutions of this kind were governed by the nominees of a foreign Lord, and not by the representatives of the people, so long would there be discontent, and so long would it be the unpleasant but necessary duty of Irish Representatives in that House to keep the British Parliament up late, and to keep some Members of the British Parliament out of their beds listening to Ireland's grievances. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. Campbell Bannerman) would only say that the Lord Lieutenant would reconsider his determination in appointing Mr. O'Brien; if words would come from the Chief Secretary's lips to the effect that he considered that the nominees of the Corporation and citizens of Cork ought to be put upon the Board; if the right hon. Gentleman would only say that he would try that, for the future, the people's nominees should not be overlooked, his words would be read to-morrow with great pleasure throughout the whole of Ireland, and would do much towards making his stay in Ireland pleasant But the right hon. Gentleman's dominant and persistent refusal to give hon Members any encouragement that, in the future, money like this would be administered by the people's representatives was calculated to give new life to agitation and to discontent; indeed, he Mr W. Redmond) fervently hoped that the Irish people would keep up agitation until such grievances as he had detailed were wiped out once and for ever.

MR LEAMY asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland Mr (Campbell-Bannerman) whether he really intended to give the Irish Representatives any explanation in regard to the statement made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan Mr Healy with respect to Dr Eames and the milkman? Of late, a great deal of attention in this country had been attracted to the management of lunatic asylums, and he hoped that this attention would be continued until some reform was brought about But he asked hon Gentlemen whether they really believed that if a doctor managing a private lunatic asylum in England was shown to have been guilty of such ignorance—to put it mildly—as Dr. Eames displayed in the cases of James Ellis French and the milkman, he would be allowed to continue in his office? Would any rich man, who was unfortunate enough to have some member of his family afflicted with insanity, put such a person in an asylum which was managed by a man who had shown himself so incapable of diagnosing insanity? But the asylum over which Dr. Eames had superintendence was a pauper lunatic asylum, and surely if any asylum needed consideration from the Members of the House of Commons, it was an asylum for pauper lunatics In many cases, pauper lunatics had no friends at all, or, if they had, their friends were poor, and probably lived at a great distance; and, therefore, to leave pauper lunatics under the care of a man like Dr. Eames was positively disgraceful. Dr. Eames gave a certificate that James Ellis French was mad. It was proved that that was wrong, and that French was not mad. Then, again, Dr. Eames was charged with the most extraordinary conduct, of which he (Mr. Leamy) never heard until to-night. It was said that this Dr. Eames, on his own motion, dragged a milkman, who was in the habit of going to the asylum, within the gates, locked him up, and put him in a straight-waistcoat. This man, too, it had been shown, was not mad; and yet Dr. Eames was allowed to retain his position What gain could there possibly be by the Chief Secretary for Ireland supporting actions of this kind. Suppose there was such a man in any asylum in London who was capable of such conduct, and that his conduct was brought under the notice of the House, would he be allowed to remain in his position 24 hours? No; he would be at once suspended. It appeared that Dr Eames was to be retained. The least the Government could do was to institute an inquiry into the sanity of Dr. Eames himself, because either the man was a scoundrel or he was insane. He could not have given certificates with regard to two people, both of which it had been proved were false and wrong, if he knew his business. If he did not know his business, he should not be continued in office. His patients were only pauper lunatics; but surely they had a right to expect the protection of the House. The question of the non-appointment of Mr. O'Brien had been already dealt with, and he would not allude to it further, except to say that,

unfortunately, it was impossible to expect that the Chief Secretary of Ireland would, in any way, recognize a man in whom the people of Ireland trusted. What he wished to lay special stress upon was a matter which had common humanity for its advocate. He asked, whether these unfortunate pauper lunatics were to be put under the care of a man who was thoroughly incompetent? If the right hon. Gentleman wished to get his Vote to-night, some information must be afforded with regard to this man, Dr. Eames. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was not prepared to give them an explanation, he (Mr. Leamy) would consider himself justified in moving that the Chairman do report Progress.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, that the facts relating to French's insanity were somewhat complicated. The original certificate was signed by three medical men, of whom Dr. Eames was one. Dr. Eames was selected to examine French, because he was an eminent and experienced man, whose opinion would naturally carry weight. At the trial, he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) believed that Dr. Wheeler, one of the most eminent doctors in Ireland, gave independent evidence to the same effect. That evidence, however, was contradicted by other physicians; but there was nothing in that to show that Dr. Eames behaved like a rogue or lunatic, as had been inferred. Whether Dr. Eames acted wisely or not he was not prepared to say. The Court decided French was sane, and, therefore, it must be presumed that Dr. Eames was in error. Certainly Dr. Eames had some ground to go upon, seeing that his opinion was assured by other medical men. With regard to the case of the milkman, of which he had not heard much——

MR. HEALY: Does not the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland know all about it?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he understood that the milkman brought an action against Dr. Eames, and that at the trial Dr. Eames obtained a verdict.

MR. HEALY said, the right hon. Gentleman had made an extraordinary statement with regard to French, for he had said that French might or might not be mad. Was that, or was it not, the statement of the right hon. Gentleman? If there was a doubt as to French's insanity, was not the right hon. Gentleman, as the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, bound to have an immediate inquiry made into the matter? The Lord Lieutenant was the dispenser of mercy in Ireland, and the right hon. Gentleman was his Secretary. In order to save this man, Dr. Eames, it was now said that French, who had been found guilty of a most horrible crime, might or might not be mad. What did that involve?

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, that French might, or might not, have been mad at the time; he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) was not competent to pronounce an opinion upon the subject. All he had to say was, that there was a certain amount of medical evidence for French's madness, and a certain amount of medical evidence against it. Dr. Eames went for his madness.

MR. HEALY said, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had stated that French might or might not be mad at the time. He (Mr. Healy) understood that the present view of the right hon. Gentleman was that French had since recovered sanity.

MR. CAMPBELL - BANNERMAN said, he had no view on the subject at all. He did not mean to express his own opinion. How could he say whether French was mad or not? What he said was, that there were certain eminent doctors for French's madness, and that there were others against it. The case was brought up for trial, and it was determined that the evidence was stronger in favour of the man not being mad than otherwise.

MR. HEALY said, that Dr. Eames was a brother Freemason of French's, and he was the first person in Ireland who was chosen by the Lord Lieutenant to test the sanity of French. The certificate which Dr. Eames gave with regard to French's condition was dated from the Cork District Lunatic Asylum, and Dr. Eames's signature was the first signature on the document. This, however, was not merely a question of the man's madness. Madness might have been feigned by French; but it must be remembered that the certificate practically divided itself into four branches. The certificate was in these words—

"We are of opinion that he is suffering from mental disease and softening of the brain, and great nervous debility, with impairment of bodily health, and that from this infirmity of mind and body he is incapable of discharging the duties of his station, and that such infirmity is likely to be permanent."

If it was a certificate of the man's madness, he could understand it being said that the man might have been feigning at the time, and that possibly, in the view of the doctors, he might have been an insane person; but Dr. Eames certified also as to infirmity of body, and that the infirmity was likely to be permanent; and therefore the question he (Mr. Healy) put to the Committee was this—"Is a person who has given a certificate of that character a proper person to be in charge of a lunatic asylum?" If a man like that was in charge of lunatic patients from day to day, was he not likely to be a judge of insanity? If he was not, why did he occupy his present position? French might have deceived Dr. Eames as to his sanity; but how could he deceive him as to infirmity of body? Surely a doctor was, at all events, a judge of the soundness of body and limb; surely he could tell whether a man's body was in a fairly sound state. A man could hardly feign that he was such an infirm cripple that he was quite incapable of discharging the duties of his situation, and that his infirmity was likely to be permanent. He asked any Member of the Committee who was not fettered by official relations, whether a doctor of this kind was one who ought to have charge of a large pauper lunatic asylum, containing hundreds of patients—an asylum upon the Board of which the Government refused to allow a single representative of the people to be nominated by such an independent Body as the Cork Corporation? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had said that Dr. Eames was acquitted. Why, as a matter of fact, Dr. Eames paid a sum of money into Court, and the jury found that, as the man was only imprisoned for a few hours, that sum was sufficient compensation for the imprisonment. There was no actual acquittal. It was not denied that Dr. Eames forcibly imprisoned the man. It was not denied that Dr. Eames ordered the man to be straight-waistcoated, and, therefore, was he (Mr. Healy) to be told that because Dr. Eames escaped with such a small penalty he was a proper man to have charge of a lunatic asylum? The sum and substance of the whole thing was that Dr. Eames was a Freemason. If he had been a Catholic he would have been turned out of his office within 24 hours. Could the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland get up, and, at the Table of the House, attempt to convince hon. Members who knew the full facts of the case? Why, the right hon. Gentleman had not even convinced his own supporters with reference to these facts. It was required to ascertain the sanity or insanity of one of the worst scoundrels in the entire country, and it was of the utmost importance that the ablest man should be selected to make the examination. The whole country was ringing with the case of James Ellis French. A popular newspaper in Ireland had attacked the man, and the whole of England, as well as of Ireland, rang with the case of this County Inspector, who was charged with the most heinous and terrible crime, and then, in order to shield him, the Government employed Dr. Eames; and when it was found that Dr. Eames had made a great mistake, the Government, through the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, attempted to screen him by saying that French might or might not have been mad at the time. According to his sentence, French was now undergoing penal servitude for two years; he was supposed to be breaking stones and picking oakum, and doing all the other terrible and dreadful tasks imposed on a convict; and yet he was the man of whom Dr. Eames had expressed the opinion that, with his infirmity of mind and body, he was incapable of discharging the duties of his situation, and that such infirmity was likely to be permanent. All he (Mr. Healy) could say was, that a Government who first of all employed a man like Dr. Eames to screen a man like French, and then, when Dr. Eames had done all the dirty work, turned round to screen him by saying that French might or might not have been mad at the time the certificate was given, was just worthy of being a Government represented by Lord Spencer.

Dr. LYONS said, that Dr. Eames was a gentleman whom he had had the pleasure of knowing for several years

past, and to whose character he could bear testimony. Dr. Eames had filled a responsible and important position for a considerable period, with, so far as he (Dr. Lyons) knew, complete satisfaction to all concerned. He believed Dr. Eames to be absolutely incapable of lending himself to any sort of a sham certificate, such as it was supposed had been furnished in the case of James Ellis French. The case of French was by no means uncommon. It very often happened that a man for a considerable time successfully shammed lunacy, and hon. Members knew, from the correspondence of French which had been published recently, that he was a man capable of exercising a considerable amount of ingenuity. He (Dr. Lyons) believed it was a part of French's case, as indeed it was a common part of such cases, to attempt to starve himself, and thereby diminish his general bodily condition.

MR. HEALY: Why, French was not in the gaol at the time of the certificate.

DR. LYONS: During part of the time he was in gaol.

MR. HEALY: The certificate was given on the 30th April; but French was not arrested until June.

DR. LYONS said, he nevertheless believed that French attempted to starve himself, and to reduce his physical condition as to weight, and to produce an appearance of delicacy. It must be admitted that he succeeded in imposing on the physicians who reported on his case. What had happened in French's case was by no means an uncommon occurrence in the history of lunacy. He (Dr. Lyons) personally had been aware of such cases, and it was only by long and repeated examination that he had succeeded in exposing them. What he desired particularly to say was that from his own personal knowledge of Dr. Eames—a knowledge which extended over a very considerable period—Dr. Eames was totally incapable of lending himself to any such misrepresentation as had been alleged by his hon. Friends sitting on the opposite Benches. Dr. Eames had pursued his profession with satisfaction to all with whom he came in contact, and he had certainly discharged the very laborious and onerous duties of his position as head of a great lunatic asylum with great satisfaction to the Governors and Directors. That a man, under certain circumstances, should be misled with regard to well-acted lunacy was not to be wondered at, when they considered the extraordinary ingenuity which persons sometimes adopted.

MR. LEAMY said, that all the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin City (Dr. Lyons) had said was that, in his opinion, Dr. Eames was incapable of lending himself to a sham certificate. Allowing, then, that that was not a sham certificate, it only showed that the man who made it was incompetent to diagnose a case of lunacy. [Dr. LYONS: He made a mistake.] Possibly, he made a mistake; but if this man had the experience of lunatics which the Committee were told he had, he should be the last man in the land to make a mistake. The hon. Member had led the Committee to suppose that French confused the mind of Dr. Eames, because he was in goal and tried to starve himself. Now, that was not the fact, because, when the certificate was given, French had not been arrested. Now, as to the case of the milkman, he (Mr. Leamy) thought they had a right to a statement of the exact details from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker). In the case of French, Dr. Eames made a wrong certificate, and in the case of the milkman, he, of his own motion, seized the man, whose business brought him to the lunatic asylum every day, threw him into a cell, and put a straight-waistcoat upon him Now, he (Mr. Leamy) wanted an explanation of these matters. Dr. Eames might have made a mistake in the case of French, and he might have given a certificate, because he was invited to do so; but, in the second case, he acted entirely upon his own responsibility; he outraged the law by seizing the man and imprisoning him, and his ground for doing so was that the man was a dangerous lunatic. He (Mr. Leamy) wanted to know whether the Government intended to keep such a man over an asylum of pauper lunatics; or were the Committee to understand that it did not matter who superintended pauper lunatics, so long as the man happened to be a friend of the Government? Dr. Eames might be an estimable gentleman in private life; but there was one thing very remarkable, and that was, that every Government official who was attacked from these

Benches was a man of the most stainless character. (Mr. HEALY: Until he is found out.) Now, with regard to the second case brought against Dr. Eames—namely, that as to the milkman, he and his hon. Friend demanded an explanation from the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, that the examination of French was made for the purpose of ascertaining whether the man was or was not capable of discharging his duties. Very much more was involved than the sanity of the man, and it was well the Committee should know that the opinion of Dr. Eames was attested by two other eminent medical men.

MR. HEALY: Also Government officials.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): Now, he had been asked about the case of the milkman who had been detained at the asylum. The man represented himself as a fit patient for the lunatic asylum. The warder took charge of him for a short time, and Dr. Eames allowed him to be put into a cell for a few hours. The man afterwards brought an action against him, and Dr. Eames lodged £5 in Court, which the Jury found was sufficient; and it was under these circumstances that Dr. Eames had been so violently assailed.

MR. CALLAN said, that if what the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland had stated were correct, Dr. Eames had committed no act whatever, but had simply allowed the warder to act. He would be glad to know whether that was a correct statement of the case? Were they to understand that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, professing to know all the facts of the case, deliberately stated that Dr. Eames had not imprisoned the man; that it was the warder who did it? He (Mr. Callan) understood that that was the very reverse of the truth. Was it true that the hon. and learned Gentleman had the audacity——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not entitled to use that language at all.

MR. CALLAN said, he withdrew the word "audacity," and would substitute for it "effrontery."

MR. HEALY said, he had never heard a more extraordinary statement from the Treasury Bench than that of the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland. Dr. Eames, at all events, gave a certificate that French had softening of the brain, great nervous debility, and infirmity of mind. He need not question then the *bona fides* of the Government for calling in Dr. Eames; it was not necessary for his purpose to do so. With regard to the milkman, he was surprised that the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland should make the statement he had made. Had he been counsel for the man, he (Mr. Healy) had no doubt he would have made a very different statement to the jury. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that the man wanted to become a patient, that the warder took him in, and that Dr. Eames allowed him to be kept in a cell a few hours, and that Dr. Eames had paid £5 into Court for damages in the action which was brought against him. The facts of the case were these. The man wanted to tender for a supply of milk to the asylum; he went there, and it would appear that, because he tendered for milk, they treated him as a lunatic. But why had Dr. Eames paid £5 into Court, if he were an innocent man? He need not have paid one farthing. Now, he (Mr. Healy) asked the hon. and learned Gentleman whether he could expect that hon. Members on those Benches could give credit to his statement, which just showed how the Law Officers appraised the intelligence of the House of Commons? Any story would do for the House of Commons; they thought anything would go down with those whom they supposed to be blockheads in the House of Commons. He said it was really astonishing that the hon. and learned Gentleman should come forward, at that time of the morning, and tell the Committee such a yarn. Dr. Eames had proved himself to be incompetent both with regard to the certificate in the case of French and the treatment of this milkman. It was absolutely necessary that some person of independent character, like Mr. O'Brien, should have a seat upon the Board of the asylum; and he would advise the ratepayers that, until they had this, they should not pay one penny of the contributions demanded of them for the

equipment and salary of men like Dr. Eames.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he should like to know whether it was permitted to warders to put people into straight-jackets and cells without instructions from the prison doctors? The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland said that the man asked to be taken in as a patient, and that Dr. Eames allowed it to be done. But was that a candid statement? Were those the real facts of the case? It appeared to him that, throughout the course of this discussion, there had been, on the part of the right hon. Gentlemen who had spoken from the Treasury Bench, a distinct want of candour. Was it candid to tell the Committee that the reason why they had not appointed Mr. O'Brien to be one of the Governors, was that the Board of Governors was already sufficiently full? Would it not have been better to say that the Lord Lieutenant did not like to have imposed upon him representatives of this kind? And he put it to the Committee whether they did not fully believe that that was the case? Might they not hope that, at a future time, there would be a little more candour on the Treasury Bench with regard to these statements? Was it not hard for the Committee to listen to, and be expected to swallow, such stories as this? He (Mr. Sullivan) said that Mr. O'Brien was well known to be a reputable citizen, a man of integrity and honour, whose character was not in the slightest degree blackened because he had fallen under the censure of the Lord Lieutenant. On the contrary, his character stood out stronger than it did before he had fallen under the censure. He would not, however, dwell further upon the subject than to observe that the Committee might as well have been treated to a chapter from the *Arabian Nights*, or *Alice in Wonderland*, as to such stories as these—that the Lord Lieutenant considered the Board of Governors was already sufficiently full, and that that was the reason he had not appointed Mr. O'Brien. He (Mr. Sullivan) said that it was not for the credit of Parliament that such stories should be handled about by Gentlemen occupying the high positions of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite. Hon. Members on those Benches regarded it as an outrage, and thought that it ought to be so regarded, that the Committee of that House should be asked to listen to stories so bare of plausibility.

MR. BIGGAR said, he had heard the greater part of the conversation with regard to this matter, and as the case had been put by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, it seemed that Dr. Eames was either an ass or a scoundrel. He might take his choice. He was either perfectly stupid and ignorant of his profession, or he was a dishonest person. He (Mr. Biggar) did not blame the Government for refusing to examine into the case, under the circumstances. If nothing had been known of the character of Dr. Eames at the time, the Government would have been justified in asking him to examine French; but the difficulty was that, knowing now that he had been proved to be either dishonest or incompetent, they should continue him in his position. That was the ground on which he found fault with the Government, and it was in keeping with the whole course of their conduct in matters of this kind. With regard to the lunatic asylum at Cork, it was known that the persons who were Governors of that asylum did not pay any proportion of the rates. They were landlords, and not occupiers, who did not contribute in proportion to the rates which supported the lunatic asylum; and they knew that the Government, notwithstanding their alleged desire to give local self-government to the people of Ireland, and to extend the franchise amongst them, continued to uphold the present system. He thought they gave very little evidence of their desire to extend popular rights and liberties by their conduct in connection with the Cork Lunatic Asylum. Because, instead of appointing to one of the Governorships of that asylum a person who had the confidence of his fellow-citizens, they appointed a man who was most unpopular with them. He would ask the hon. Member for King's County (Sir Patrick O'Brien) if he would give the Committee the benefit of his opinion with regard to the conduct of Dr. Eames, and whether, under the circumstances, the Government were justified in continuing his salary.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Member (Mr. Biggar) was not in Order in calling on an hon. Member to speak.

MR. BIGGAR said, in that case, he would ask the Chairman to call on the hon. Baronet to state whether he was satisfied that French was a person of unsound mind, and whether he thought the case of the unfortunate milkman who was detained was one which could be justified, and whether he thought the Government were justified in screening the conduct of Dr. Eames? Hon. Members on those Benches thought the Government were, on these grounds, to be censured; and he should move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £200, the amount of Dr. Eames' salary for three months.

Motion made, and Question put,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £890, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, in aid of the Local Cost of Maintenance of Pauper Lunatics in Ireland."—(*Mr. Biggar*)

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 22; Noes 61: Majority 39.—(Div. List, No. 51)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Sexton*)

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): It is necessary that I should now explain the position in which we stand as to Supply. The Committee will remember that last year the question as to the time within which certain Votes must be taken was fully discussed and considered. The result was that as on the Thursday corresponding to the present Thursday we had not finished the Supplementary Estimates, we had to take the Supplementary Estimates on the following Saturday, with the scandal of having to sit into Sunday. I think we ought to finish to-night the Supplementary Estimates, over which, I am bound to say, we have been spending an unusual amount of time, instead of taking them on Saturday, and possibly having to repeat the scandal of finishing them on Sunday morning. If the Committee are desirous of knowing why there is a special necessity for that being done, I may say that there is even more necessity for it this year than last. There was not so much controversy last year over the Navy Votes, and it was found possible to take a Vote on Account also on the same day; but I think everyone who knows what has to be discussed on the Navy Vote will see that it is very doubtful whether we shall be able to do that this year. Therefore, as next week is the last week in which we can take the Army and Navy Votes, it will be absolutely necessary to give the whole of it to Supply. It is therefore a matter of urgent necessity that we should finish the Supplementary Estimates to-night; and I can only say that I am quite ready to sit up all night for the purpose, rather than repeat what we did last year, and finish them on Sunday.

MR. SEXTON said, the right hon. Gentleman opposite Mr. Childers had omitted one important fact—namely, that last year the Session commenced on the 6th of February. This year, in consequence of the extraordinary call made upon hon. Members at the end of last year, the Session did not begin until the 19th of February. Where was the necessity that the whole of next week should be given up to the Army and Navy Estimates. He thought the right hon. Gentleman might easily arrange to apportion some of next week to the Supplementary Estimates. And, again, why should to-morrow's Sitting be given up to the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, for which, notwithstanding that there was no need to hurry in the matter, the Government had obtained precedence? He asked the right hon. Gentleman to put down Supply for to-morrow as the first Order of the Day, and retire the Order for Committee on the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill. He had sat in the House during 10½ hours already, and certainly did not wish to sit up all night for the purpose of passing the Supplementary Estimates.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): We cannot assent to the proposal of the hon. Member, for Supply has no privilege except on Mondays and Thursdays. The effect of the hon. Gentleman's proposal would be, that we should not have the same means of going into Supply on the day he names which we have on Mondays and Thursdays.

MR. SEXTON asked what would be the effect if hon. Members undertook

to make no Motions on going into Supply?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I am afraid that is a matter beyond me. Hon. Gentlemen opposite cannot control or govern the House in that respect; and it is, therefore, quite out of my power to assume that any other days in the week will be devoted to Supply but Mondays and Thursdays.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the observations of the right hon. Gentleman applied only to the Supplementary Estimates; he had not spoken of a Vote on Account.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I stated that last year we did take the Navy Estimates and the Vote on Account on the same night, because although there was a great deal of discussion on the Army Estimates, on the Navy Estimates there was very little discussion indeed.

MR. HEALY said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave as a reason for not taking these Votes to-morrow that Motions might be put down on going into Committee of Supply. Well, presumably the right hon. Gentleman had full control over his own Members; and as the only Members of the Tory Party now present were the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), and the hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler), neither of whom were likely to hunger with any very urgent desire for an opportunity to put down a Motion, and the Irish Members were not likely to put down Motions—taking these facts into consideration, and knowing that Motions could not be put down for to-morrow, unless Notice were given of them now, he hoped the course pointed out would be adopted by the Government. [Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, Motions could be put down.] If that were so, of course it could not be helped. At any rate, it was better to take the chance that Motions on going into Committee of Supply would break down at a reasonable time than to refuse the reasonable request of the Irish Members. It was better to do that than to drop the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill at a reasonable hour to take Diplomatic and other Votes, in which the Irish Members were not particularly interested, and then expect them to sit up to a very unreasonable hour discussing Votes upon which they had a great deal to say. It was stated by the Government that the Votes Irish Members wanted to consider would take a long time to discuss; but he would remind the Committee that the Diplomatic Vote had lasted four hours, and that, at the best, the discussion upon it was only of an academic character. The amount of money now involved was £3,500,000; and, in his opinion, if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer wanted that sum to-night, he was hardly likely to get it. There was material enough in these Votes to enable the Irish Members to discuss many points for a considerable time. Even if they sat up all night, they might find themselves unable to dispose of all these subjects; and it might be necessary to sit up for two nights—that was to say, if the Government thought to cram these Votes down their throats. Last year the Irish Members, at the request of the Government, who offered a compromise, forewent their discussion; but months were on, and they ultimately found that absolutely nothing was given to them in return for the course they had taken. His experience of wrangles of this kind was that they came to no good, and his advice to the Government was—"Go to bed early, if you can." When these wrangles were continued, it was not unfrequently the case that towards the close Members of the Liberal Party got disgusted with the business, and put pressure on their Leaders to bring the wrangle to a close. Moreover, the officers of the House found their health ruined by these arrangements, and the result was a general cave in all along the line. Well, he (Mr. Healy) was always in favour of amicable arrangements—[*Laughter, and* "Hear, hear!"] He was only giving an opinion for himself—for no one else. He approved of amicable arrangements; and he would, therefore, suggest that they should dispose of the Superannuation Vote, the Inland Revenue Vote, and the Telegraphic Vote to-night, and leave the Civil Contingency Vote and the Temporary Commission Vote to Monday. In the Vote for Temporary Commissions an important question would arise. The Irish Members had come down to-night, not expecting the

Diplomatic Vote would last so long, and believing that they would have had an opportunity of discussing the boundary question. The material to be used in this discussion was voluminous. Then, in the Civil Contingencies Vote, he found such an item as this—

"The Right Hon A W Peel, equipage on election as Speaker of the House of Commons, £1,000."

He should like to have some explanation of that. Then there was another item—

"Payment to Surgeon Wheeler for attendance on Mr Shaen Carter in pursuance of a verdict against the Crown given in the Court of Exchequer in November 1883, £1,147 18s."

That also would have to be remarked upon; and, lastly, there was—

"The compassionate grant to Mrs. Eliza Colgan in consideration of loss caused by the misconduct of Crown Solicitor in Ireland, £250."

on which they would have a good bit to say. These were matters of importance in themselves, and he hardly thought it was the way to treat the House of Commons, to take it by surprise at that hour of the morning, and inform it, for the first time, that it was intended to ask to-night for this £3,500,000. It would have been more candid for the Government to have informed the Irish Members earlier that they intended to apply for all these Votes, and then Members would have known what to do. The great argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer seemed to be that an All-night Sitting had led to a "Sunday scandal." Well, he (Mr. Healy) thought, with regard to Sitting on Sunday, that the better the day the better the deed. His recollection of what occurred during the last Sitting which ran into the Sunday was, that it was remarkably enjoyable. He (Mr. Healy, did not belong to the Sunday Rest Association, therefore he had no objection to the Votes being postponed until Saturday; and if it should be necessary to go on with the debates after 12 o'clock, he saw no reason to believe that his constituents would object to having their grievances exposed and discussed a minute after midnight any more than a minute before midnight. Let the disputed Votes be put down for Saturday. To his mind, it was much more important that the Government should, at that hour of the night, enter into a friendly understanding as to the discussions to be taken in Committee, and that they should put their heads together for the purpose of arriving at a general friendly understanding, and that they should postpone the Votes, and take them either to-morrow or Saturday.

MR. MOLLOY said, that, under existing circumstances, it seemed to him that a Saturday Sitting was absolutely necessary; because, supposing even though they remained there all night, the items before them would require so much discussion that they would of necessity involve a Saturday Sitting. No matter how much good-will might be shown in this matter, it was impossible to hope that a discussion on all the items could be disposed of in a night, unless some arrangement were concluded between the different Parties in the House. He understood the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say that it was impossible to bring on the Supplementary Estimates to-morrow, because Notices of Motion would be put down, and would have to be disposed of before the Speaker could leave the Chair. He did not think there would be any waste of time of particular importance, so far as he could gather. He (Mr. Molloy) could foresee that, under any circumstances, they would have to take a Saturday Sitting. As the Irish Members were willing to discuss the Votes on Saturday, and as the Government were willing to make an effort on their part, surely the compromise suggested by the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) could be agreed to. Let them have these Votes brought on in an orderly and proper manner, and disposed of on Saturday, instead of being fiddled with to-night.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, if he could see an opening for a reasonable compromise he should be glad to accept it. He thought, from what had fallen from hon. Gentlemen opposite, that it was possible to meet them half way. He noticed that there were a good many disputed items on the Civil Contingencies Vote, and it was also suggested that

there were questions to be raised on the Vote for the Boundary Commission. But perhaps hon. Gentlemen had not observed that, as there was a Bill before the House in which the recommendations of the Boundary Commissioners were embodied, those recommendations could not be considered in Supply. The House would have to discuss them on the Bill; and the only question that hon. Members could discuss in Supply would be the constitution of the Commission. He would not, therefore, propose to postpone that Vote; but he would agree to postpone the Vote on Account. If they took the rest of the Votes before the Committee, the Vote for General Gordon and others which were purely formal, then, on Monday, they could proceed with the Civil Contingencies Vote, the Vote on Account, and the Excesses Vote, on the understanding that the House would allow them to be taken at whatever hour they might come on.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he was of opinion—and he believed his view was shared by hon. Gentlemen who sat near him—that they had better accept the offer made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer in such a conciliatory spirit.

Mr. SEXTON said, that, if they did so, it was rather because they were always ready to recognize any evidence of an amicable spirit on the part of the Government, than that they accepted all the conclusions of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman were perfectly sound and irresistible with regard to all the Supplementary Votes. It was necessary that these Votes should be taken on a certain day, in order that the Appropriation Bill might be got through before the end of the financial year; but he was at a loss to know how it was that a Vote on Account, which related to the next financial year, was so absolutely necessary.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

(7.) £107, Redemption of Consolidated Fund Allowances.

Mr. WARTON said, he wished to call attention to this Vote, his object being to insure a full and accurate statement in the Estimates. He saw in the Vote the following item:—

"For commutation of a yearly payment of £2 1*s.* 10*d.* to the lord of the manor of Appuldurcombe under 36 and 37 Vic. c. 57, and for the purpose of sufficient Capital Stock of Three Per Cents. Annuities for transference to the official Trustees of Charitable Funds to enable them to take over the payment of a yearly allowance of £1 12*s.* to the Master of Oswestry School under the Act 46 and 47 Vic. c. 55, s. 18, £107."

It would be seen that this Vote of £107 was made up of two items; separate statements were given with regard to these; but the Vote was a lump sum for the two. There could be no question about paying the item, because the sum was one which they were not only bound to spend, but which probably they had spent already; but his object was to have everything in these items stated as distinctly as it could be.

Mr. HIBBERT said, he agreed that it would have been much better if the amounts had been put down separately. If he had any power in the future, he would take care that they were put down separately.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(8.) £3,800, Temporary Commissions.

Mr. SEXTON said, he had said a few minutes ago that the Irish Members had a desire to ask for further information than the Boundary Commissioners had laid before the House. The Commissioners had presented maps of the final boundaries, and certain documents called Reports, which, however, were very meagre in their character. They assuredly had not guided the Commissioners in arriving at their final scheme. That information was exclusively stored in certain rooms of Whitehall; and he therefore asked that hon. Members might have access to it. The Irish Members intended to dispute the decisions of the Boundary Commissioners in certain instances. The Irish Members desired to have the evidence collected by the Commissioners and used by them in coming to a final decision, and they wished to make the Commissioners the servants of the House instead of its masters. The House would be better able to reverse the judgment of the Commissioners with the evidence before

it upon which the Commission itself founded its judgment. He had no doubt the information he required could be given without inconvenience.

MR. HEALY said, he should like to know, in addition upon this Vote, how the amount was to be appropriated? There was, he understood, £3,800 asked for as a Supplementary provision; and he should like to know whether the Commissioners, at least as far as Ireland was concerned, were being paid, because he had some reason to believe that such was not the case, and that these gentlemen were doing the work for nothing? He thought that men of this kind should be paid for their work, conceiving it to be very undesirable that they should be going about the country declaring that they had been fulfilling these important functions for nothing. He desired to have some information beyond that which was at present available to hon. Members, concerning certain districts in which he and his hon. Friends were interested—for instance, Tyrone, Down, Armagh, Derry, Donegal, and Dublin City. They were not so particular with regard to Tyrone and County Down; but they were very particular with regard to the others. He would go further than the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) as to the evidence which they would require. The evidence upon which the Dublin City divisions were decided upon were certainly somewhat extraordinary. The Commissioners had adopted a scheme of the Conservative Party which had not been presented on the day appointed for the discussion; it was handed in next morning at a totally different inquiry—to the inquiry relating to the City of Dublin. The scheme was considered to be altogether absurd; and it was believed that it had not the slightest chance of being adopted. It was laughed at as a joke on the part of the Orange Emergency people. The Irish Members would, in addition to the information his hon. Friend wanted, like to have the scheme proposed by the Conservative Party in this case. It was only five or six schemes that the Irish Members asked for. As to the maps the Commissioners had drawn up, so far as Ireland was concerned they had good reason to complain of them. In England, where they had no baronies, it did not much matter how the outlines of the divisions were shown; but in Ireland, where the Lord Lieutenant's instructions were that baronies should mark the line of division, baronies should be shown. In the Irish map, however, there was nothing to show these divisions. The City of Derry was not shown in the map of Donegal—Derry, as hon. Members were aware, being on the other bank of the Foyle. The object of preparing the plans in this way had, no doubt, been to throw dust into the eyes of the public. Then take the Lough of Strangford; to look at the map, no one would imagine, who did not know the district, that there was water there at all; it was divided so awkwardly, and the map was so inexpressive. Probably, if it were not for Lough Swilly, hon. Members might have no idea that there was a lough there. It was not candid, he maintained, to use maps in that way, simply, as he believed, for the purpose of blindfolding the House.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he thought he could meet the hon. and learned Gentleman on certain points. Far from admitting that he thought the maps were so bad, his opinion really was that they had been prepared with great care. He had to admit that the map of Dublin City was difficult to make out. City maps were always difficult to make out. He had been able to understand the county maps very easily; but the map of Dublin City he admitted had been a puzzling one. With regard to the hon. Member's request that maps showing the original scheme should be given to the House, the hon. and learned Member had not put the request to-night in exactly the same form which he had put it in the House some time ago; and he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) might be able now to meet him. The hon. and learned Member wished to know whether he could circulate amongst Members a map showing the original scheme. It would not be difficult to do that with regard to six or seven schemes only; but he thought if they agreed to the request they would soon be asked to do the same in the case of all the English schemes. The more important question of the hon. and learned Member was that with regard to some further statement of reasons by the Commissioners; and upon that point he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would

endeavour to meet the hon. and learned Gentleman. To-morrow he would be able to see one or two of the leading Members of the Boundary Commission; and he would ask them, if they had not themselves got sufficient facts to make a proper statement before the House, to obtain the facts from those who held the inquiries; if they could make a distinct Report he would ask them to make it, and lay it before the House. Of course, he could not pledge himself to the exact form of the Report; but he would do his best to obtain the information which was desired. He was not allowed on this Vote to discuss the details of the changes which had been made; but he might say, in passing, that, whatever case the hon. and learned Member might make out with regard to certain boundaries, he had been misled by considering the case of Dublin County by itself. If the hon. and learned Gentleman were to look at some of the Scotch schemes, at some of the Middlesex divisions, at the Tyneside divisions, at some of the South Wales divisions, he would find them very similar indeed to the Kingstown division in the county of Dublin. As he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had already stated to the Committee, Sir John Lambert served on all three Commissions. Sir John Lambert was in a very delicate state of health, and yet he came forward and gave an amount of time and labour to the Commission such as had seldom been witnessed. Sir Francis Sandford followed his example, and asked not to be paid. The other gentlemen had been paid at the rate of so much a-day—in some cases at the rate of five guineas a-day, and in other cases at the rate of three guineas a-day.

MR. SEXTON said, the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had ventured a defence of the boundaries of the county of Dublin; but when the time came he (Mr. Sexton) and his hon. Friends would be able to show that there were aspects and features in the boundaries of county Dublin which had no parallel in the Three Kingdoms. He would like to know if the Assistant Boundary Commissions were still in existence, or if their powers were exhausted; because, in Committee, it might be found necessary to refer to the Commissioners themselves.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the three Boundary Commissions ceased to exist a day or two before the House resumed its Sittings; but he had asked Sir John Lambert, Sir Francis Sandford, and Colonel Owen Jones to continue to advise him, and they had kindly consented to do so. Whenever a point arose, he should suggest that it should be referred to those gentlemen.

Vote *agreed to.*

(9.) £15,400, Inland Revenue.

(10.) £20,000, Post Office Telegraphs.

(11.) £20,000, Grant to the Family of the late General Charles George Gordon.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I think I ought, on this Vote, to give the reason why, after the lamentable fate of General Gordon—he was a personal friend of mine, and no one deplores his loss more than I do—it became part of the duty of Her Majesty's Government to consider whether any grant should be made to his family. There were doubts whether certain members of his family would wish to receive any grant of public money, and also it was difficult at first to know what might have been General Gordon's own wishes in a matter of that kind, and how, if this grant were made, he would wish it to be divided amongst the members of his family. Perhaps I may say now that the Prime Minister would have made the statement I am now making, had he been able to be in his place. I know, however, that I represent my right hon. Friend's views on the subject. The first question we wished to ascertain was, what would probably have been General Gordon's wishes in this matter; and, secondly, what would be the wishes of his family if Parliament thought fit to propose a grant for them. The Committee will observe that we have worded the grant in this way—

"This sum will be paid to trustees, and will be applied by them for the benefit of General Gordon's family, in accordance, as far as possible, with his last wishes, and in such manner as Her Majesty may direct."

Now, after some trouble, we ascertained that General Gordon expressed his latest wishes in a paper which may, perhaps, not be called a will, but which was

equivalent to a will. Those wishes were that any capital sum he might receive —and he expected to receive a considerable sum from the King of the Belgians —should be expended in a particular way. The Committee will remember that General Gordon was in the service of the King of the Belgians at the time Her Majesty's Government asked him to go to the Soudan, and that his service with the King of the Belgians would probably have resulted in a considerable pecuniary benefit to him. He expressed, in the paper I have referred to, a wish that the interest on whatever sum he might receive should be applied for the benefit of his sister, or some of his sisters, in the first instance, and that the capital sum should ultimately be divided amongst the whole of his nephews and nieces. That, we are satisfied, was his intention as to any sum he might receive from the King of the Belgians. I do not remember the exact number of his nephews and nieces; but it is a large number. I think General Gordon left three sisters, two of whom are married. There are also the widows of two brothers, and altogether in the families of his brothers and sisters there are a considerable number both of sons and daughters. We propose, then, to follow out what we believe were General Gordon's wishes, of course reserving, in the words of the Resolution, to Her Majesty power to make any other direction as to the appropriation of the grant, should further information be received as to the deceased's wishes in the matter. I have given the Committee all the information I have at this moment.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER thought the Committee generally would agree with the proposition the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer put before them. The purpose for which he rose was to make a suggestion to the right hon. Gentleman. There was a movement, on a large scale, to raise a memorial to General Gordon; but he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) did not think that any private memorial could express the feeling of the country. He would, therefore, ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider with his Colleagues whether it would not be within the power of the Government to propose a Vote to the House to erect a national monument to the memory of the gallant General in St. Paul's Cathedral? He threw the suggestion out to the right hon. Gentleman, because he thought that its adoption would meet with cordial approval both in the House and in the country.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he would inform his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister of what the hon. Gentleman (Mr. R. N. Fowler) proposed; and he was sure it would receive the right hon. Gentleman's serious consideration.

Mr. O'KELLY said, that, in connection with this Vote, it was proper to ask the Government whether they would not take into consideration the propriety of making a grant to the family of Mr. Power? Mr. Power died in the service of the country, and had some claim, he Mr. O'Kelly thought, to the consideration of the Government.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said, he agreed with his hon. Friend (Mr. O'Kelly) that it would give great satisfaction to many people if the Government were to make suitable provision for the family of Mr. Power, a gentleman who, like General Gordon, lost his life in the public service. It was well he (Mr. William Redmond) should say that he was speaking altogether without any knowledge of what the feeling of the family was; but he knew Mr. Power personally, and he had a great admiration for his character.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that he would not fail to represent the wishes of the hon. Gentlemen (Mr. O'Kelly and Mr. William Redmond) to the Prime Minister. It was well, however, to point out that Mr. Power was an unpaid commercial Consul, and the services of such Consuls were not counted as public services.

Mr. SEXTON said, that the fact that Mr. Power's services were not paid for was a very bad reason for not making his family compensation. Mr. Power was a man who underwent considerable hardship, faced extraordinary peril, and ultimately lost his life in the public service. Seeing how often Mr. Power's services had been described and acknowledged in the country, in the Press, and even in the House by Ministers of the Crown, it would be ungracious in the

Government of a wealthy nation if they did not compensate his family.

Vote *agreed to.*

(12.) £292,500, Army.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The reason for asking this Vote is given on the face of the Estimate; but I may be allowed to add a few words of explanation. The Vote will form no charge whatever on the taxpayer, but is necessary because the original Estimate for 1884-5 assumed that a large amount would be received from the Egyptian Treasury on account of the Army of Occupation; whereas this amount will not be paid during the present financial year, but early in 1885-6. The state of Egyptian finance justified our postponing, from time to time, calls on Egypt for the instalments of this contribution as they became due; and we did so in the full belief that the new loan would be raised before the end of this month, and that all the payments would then be made. But delays, with which the Committee is acquainted, have occurred, and the Convention and Decree under which the loan will be raised are not yet signed. We must, therefore, vote what Egypt was to contribute, and recover the amount after the 31st instant. This explanation covers the next Vote also. In all, Egypt contributes £4 per month per man, of which £3 5*s.* is credited to the Army, and 15*s.*, for transport and other services, to the Navy.

Vote *agreed to.*

(13.) £52,200, Navy.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) explained that this sum also ought to have been paid by the Egyptian Government before the 31st of the present month. They would not, however, be able to pay it until after the 1st of April, when the loan would be raised. The money would then be paid and received in the coming financial year instead of in the present one.

MR. TOMLINSON said, that this was an exceedingly peculiar arrangement. He believed the impression of the public had always been that the loan proposed to be raised was not to meet the annual current expenditure of Egypt, but to make good some capital charges.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, it was to meet a deficiency in the contribution due to us this year by Egypt. The amount would be paid out of the loan.

MR. TOMLINSON asked, if the sum borrowed from Messrs. Rothschild would be repaid?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the loan would cover that, of course; but this Vote had nothing to do with that. The payment of this sum by Egypt had been postponed until after the 1st of April. Her Majesty's Government did not wish to press the Egyptian Government until the loan had been raised.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, why there would not be a reduction on the Estimates of the coming year corresponding with the addition to the Estimates of the present year?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he did not know whether the hon. Gentleman had studied the rules as to bringing to account grants in aid. If more money came in aid than was shown in the Estimates, the amount would be paid into the Exchequer. This sum, when received from Egypt, would be paid into the Exchequer.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked, if the right hon. Gentleman had it in his power to cite a single instance in which the Estimates of the appropriations in aid were verified by the actual results?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Yes; I think so.

Vote *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

ELECTIONS IN COUNTIES (HOURS OF POLL) (*re-committed*) BILL.

(*Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Grey, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Cochran-Patrick.*)

[BILL 85.] COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Hours of polling in counties) *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Definitions).

On the Motion of Mr. SEXTON, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 18, after "alderman," insert "or any commissioner."

On the Motion of Mr. SEXTON, the following Amendment made:—

In page 1, line 30, after "same," insert "and includes a place subject to the Act of the ninth year of the reign of King George the Fourth, chapter eighty-two, or to 'The Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854,' or to any local Act providing for the election of Commissioners in any town or place for purposes similar to the purposes of the above-mentioned Acts."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to*.

Clause 3 (Repeal of 41 & 42 *Vict.* and 47 & 48 *Vict.*, c. 34 *agreed to*.

MR. SEXTON, in moving to insert, after Clause 3, the following new Clause:—

"During the twenty-four hours, from midnight to midnight, within which the poll at an election subject to this Act is taken for any place defined in section two, such place shall be exempt from the operation of section eleven of 'The Prevention of Crime (Ireland) Act, 1882,'"

said, the police had very considerable powers in Ireland after dark, and hon. Members knew full well to what lengths constables would sometimes go in derogation of their rights. The object of this clause was to secure to the voter free access to the poll.

New Clause *brought up*, and read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he was not in a position to accept this clause, and he could not accept it that night for reasons which he would very briefly give to the Committee. This Bill, should it become an Act, would come into force at the end of the present Parliament. Now, the Crimes Act was a temporary Act, and the question of its renewal, as a whole or in part, would shortly have to be considered by himself and his Colleagues. Up to the present, no decision had been come to on the point which would justify him in debating upon the merits of a clause relating to a particular portion of the Crimes Act. It was impossible, therefore, for him to accept the clause.

MR. HEALY said, that if the right hon. Baronet's (Sir Charles W. Dilke's) argument was a good one, it would have been a proper one to set up in the case of the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act. In that Act he (Mr. Healy) got a clause inserted, to the effect that the Crimes Act should not apply to any offence which was in the former Act. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman, therefore, fell to the ground. He and his hon. Friends were glad to hear that the Cabinet had not yet decided to renew the Crimes Act; but, after all, the right hon. Gentleman's statement did not correspond with a statement recently made by the Government Whip (Lord Richard Grosvenor). The noble Lord, who did not fling away his words, either in or out of the House, told his constituents the other day that it was the intention of the Government to renew the Crimes Act, and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone) was reported in the Irish papers to have made a similar statement. [MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE: I did not say that.] At that time of the morning (3.30), he could not ask the hon. Gentleman what he did say. Anyhow, if the Government did resolve to renew the Crimes Act, the least thing they could do was to provide that its Curfew Clauses should not extend to polling. If the Government did not intend to renew the Crimes Act, the blot now existing in the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act should be removed.

MR. SEXTON said, he took it, from what had been stated, that the Government had as yet formed no intention as to the renewal of the Crimes Act. That was an interesting statement, and enabled him to indulge a hope that they might, at a later period, be able to inform the House that they did not intend to ask for its renewal. If, on the contrary, they should propose to renew it, there would still be an Irish Party who would use every endeavour to oppose it. He would now ask leave to withdraw the clause.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. WARTON rose to move the insertion of the following Clause:—

"Part II. of the First Schedule of 'The Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, 1883,' shall be read and construed as if the words following were not contained therein, viz., 'not exceeding the amount authorised by the Act of the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth years of Victoria, chapter eighty-four'."

THE CHAIRMAN said, the clause the hon. and learned Member proposed to move was one which it was clearly not in the power of the Committee to insert; and he should, therefore, rule that the clause was out of Order.

MR. WARTON rose to Order. He wished to point out that the Bill made an alteration in the hours of polling; and by extending them would, therefore, extend the labour of the Returning Officers. Owing to a singular blunder in the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, which he had noticed at the time, there was an inconsistency which was very curious; and the result was that a Returning Officer might charge more than he had a right to charge, and a Member might lose his seat. He, therefore, submitted that some consideration should be given to the point.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT rose to Order. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) was persisting in moving a clause which the Chairman had declared to be out of Order.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the hon. and learned Member for Bridport was speaking to a point of Order.

MR. WARTON said, he was pointing out that if the poll were kept open hours longer than hitherto the labour of the Returning Officers would be increased, and the payments would necessarily be larger.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he felt bound to rule that the clause was out of Order, and that it was not in the power of the Committee to insert it; but it was perfectly competent to the hon. and learned Member for Bridport to move it on Report.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, it might save time, and prevent the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Warton) putting the clause down for the Report, if he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) were now to state that the point raised was one on which his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would propose some legislation, as he fancied it would be necessary to adopt some such provision as the hon. and learned Member proposed.

Remaining Clauses *agreed to.*

Bill *reported.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be considered To-morrow."

MR. WARTON said, he would suggest that the Report stage should be considered that day week, as some Notice would be required for the clause promised on behalf of Her Majesty's Government.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, if the hon. and learned Member would give to the Clerk at the Table the Amendment which the Chairman had ruled out of Order in the Committee stage there need be no further Notice.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked, whether it was understood that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would bring in a clause?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, if the hon. and learned Member for Bridport would place the clause in the hands of the Clerk at the Table without delay, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would inform his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General what was proposed to be done. He perfectly understood the object of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, and his impression was that to meet that object it would be necessary to insert the clause in another Bill; but if it were handed in at once he would consult the Attorney General, and inform the hon. Gentleman as to the course that would be proposed.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill, as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

MUNICIPAL VOTERS (RELIEF) BILL.

(*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

[BILL 64.] CONSIDERATION, AS AMENDED. THIRD READING.

Order for Consideration read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill, as amended, be now considered."

MR. HEALY said, he understood that no Amendment had been proposed or made in the Bill; and he wished to ask, as a point of Order, whether there was really any stage of the Bill before the House? As there had been no Amendment to the Bill, in his judgment the heading given to it in the Orders of the Day was inaccurate, and the Bill could not come before the House under the stage of a Bill to be considered, as amended.

Mr. SPEAKER: The stage has not been abolished, although there has been no Amendment to the Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill, as amended, *considered*; read the third time, and *passed*.

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (SECOND BALLOT) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Brett, Bill to amend the Law relating to Parliamentary Elections by providing for a Second Ballot in certain cases, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Brett, Mr. John Morley, and Mr. Broadhurst.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 94.]

BARRISTERS ADMISSION (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Callan, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Admission of Barristers in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Callan, Mr Parnell, Mr. Justin M'Carthy, Mr. Healy, Mr Leamy, and Mr Kenny.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 95.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Four o'clock in the morning.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 13*th March*, 1885.

MINUTES.] - Private Bill — *Second Reading* — British Agricultural Association, *negatived*.
Public Bill — *First Reading* — Municipal Voters (*Relief*) * (39).

BRITISH AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

The Marquess of SALISBURY, in rising to move that the Bill be now read a second time, said: My Lords, this is a Bill which involves considerations of very great importance to the agricultural interest; and I should have thought that it would, as a matter of course, be read a second time and referred to a Select Committee. It has had the misfortune, however, to attract the unfavourable notice of my noble Friend at the Table (the Earl of Redesdale); and in face of his hostility, which is always regarded, and justly regarded, as so powerful in this House, I am bound to lay before your Lordships the reasons why I think this Bill ought to be read a second time, and referred to a Committee to examine its details. I wish to lay emphasis on this fact—that I am urging the second reading of this Bill because, by so doing, I shall relieve myself of the necessity of going into a number of details, of which the Bill is full, and which, if they are challenged, can be remedied in Committee. I am only asking you so far to approve the main principle of the Bill as to send it in the ordinary course to be examined by a Select Committee. What is the principle which I am urging on your Lordships to accept? You are aware of the great disasters which have befallen agriculture during recent years, and one of the worst consequences of those disasters is that agricultural credit has almost entirely disappeared. Before the bad years money was lent largely to farmers—at a very high rate of interest very often, but still lent — and the farmers had money on which to work; but when the bad years came these loans were drawn in, very often to the ruin of the farmers and the suffering of the banks. There is, in fact, no agricultural credit, speaking generally and roughly, to be had; and if the law remains in its present state there is no prospect of an early revival of agricultural credit, because the security is not sufficient, considering the smallness of the profit, to invite investors to invest their money in such enterprizes. The proposal in this Bill is to enable a Company of capitalists to lend money to the farmer against his crop — against the crop which the money advanced is intended to raise; so that if he intends to raise an expensive crop in a certain field he shall be at liberty to pledge that individual credit, that crop, to pay the interest and the capital by which the crop is raised. That cannot be done now, because the mixture of chattel interest in the crop and the farmer's own interest in the land prevent the ordinary machinery of a bill of sale from being applied. You will say —"What possible objection can there be to a capitalist being allowed to advance money upon a crop to be repaid

out of the proceeds of that particular crop, the crop being ear-marked for the purpose?" Well, the objection is this —that there are other creditors upon the farmer's holding, and that the new creditor will stand before these others. But it is to be noticed that it is not proposed that the capitalist should stand before the landlord, because that would not be just. The landlord furnishes the land, and the capitalist furnishes the capital; and it would not be fair that the capitalist should come and thrust the landlord aside and stand before him. The landlord's interest is, therefore, saved. He has an absolute priority on any proceedings under this Bill; but after the landlord the crop is set aside in order to pay the capital by which it has been grown, and no other creditor of the farmer, as respects that crop, can step in and take it. It seems that that in itself is a perfectly just proceeding, because but for the advance of the loan there would be no crop grown; and it is certainly for the public interest that the crop should be grown; and, therefore, it is for the public interest that the capitalist should be allowed to have a lien on the crop. The same has been done in other countries—in New South Wales, for instance, where, in many instances, money is lent for the crop on the security of the crop. But in the present instance we have a precedent, and in this country precedents are invaluable. We have the principle of an advance specially guaranteed from the land by the Act of 1864, under which lenders were empowered to lend money to landlords to enable them to make improvements upon the land, and that stood in front of all mortgages which might previously have been upon the same land. We ask you to do for the farmer what has been done again and again, and on an enormous scale, for the owner. We ask you to enable the occupier to pledge the improvements which he has made by the money lent for that purpose. The owner can do that already, and it is just that the occupier should be able to do it. It is, however, not only just; unless it is done the agricultural interest cannot rise again for a long time from the depression in which it is. I have heard of one solid argument against the principle of this Bill, and that is, that if this is a good thing it should be done by a Public Bill. But my answer to that is that in the present state of Business in Parliament it is laughing at us to say that you must pass Public Bills. You can only pass large Bills behind which there is great pressure; but a Bill which aims at nothing but doing good cannot be passed. But to tell us that because one Parliamentary road is blocked up therefore we must not try another which is open is merely to laugh at the misfortunes under which agriculture is labouring. We have, however, something more powerful than argument or common sense. We have a good precedent. This very thing has been done again and again in favour of the owner—that is, Private Bills have been passed on the subject before any Public Bill. A Public Bill was not passed until 1864. Again and again Private Bills were passed before that date. Amongst these there was the Act passed in 1848 with regard to the West of England Company which obtained this privilege. In 1849 there was the Act conferring the power on the General Land Drainage Company; in 1853 there was the case of the Lands Improvement Company; in 1856 the Scottish Drainage Company, and in 1860 another Company, obtained this power. All these were Private Bills, and we only ask to do for the occupier what has been done again and again for the owner; and I am sure if this Bill becomes law it will confer enormous benefits on that interest which is now suffering so severely, and which of all other interests in the country is deserving of your Lordships' consideration.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."
—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, it was his duty, occupying the position which he did, to oppose this Bill. Nothing could be more dangerous than to allow private legislation to supersede public legislation. The effect of this Bill would be, if passed, that an example would be set in favour of placing private before public legislation. In other words, this Bill practically did away with the Bankruptcy Act, for the tenant was protected against the operation of the Bankruptcy Act under the operation of this Bill. The tenant also came under a contract of partnership with this Company, and the effect of the Bill would be that

there would be an example set of legislation for private purposes, setting aside that which was already public law relating to such matters. He considered that nothing could be more dangerous than tampering with the law. If his noble Friend would introduce a Bill of a general character dealing with the objects he had in view, he would pass it through this House; and if its objects were desirable, he had no doubt it would also pass through the other House of Parliament. He denied that it was impossible to find time to pass a Public Bill on this subject. There were many Public Bills that did pass as well as Government measures; and no doubt if a Public Bill were introduced it would receive every attention from the two Houses. The public law with regard to debtor and creditor was set aside by this Bill. He wanted to know why a Company should have power to advance money for such purposes? Why should a landlord not have the same powers? He had no interest in the Bill one way or the other; but he held that it was an improper Bill for the House to sanction in the shape of private legislation.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he must express his concurrence in the objection taken by the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees, as to the principle of the Bill. He was very sorry to object to any Bill which was brought forward to benefit the agricultural interest. He felt as acutely as anyone the present position of agricultural industry; but he felt also the importance of the principle involved in maintaining the proper line of demarcation between public and private legislation, and that principle greatly exceeded the importance of this Bill. Private legislation concerned only the interests of private persons or private Companies, and no person had a *locus standi* against a Private Bill except the persons who claimed to have private interests with which it interfered All those persons, and those only, might be heard against it. Questions of public policy were never considered at all; and it therefore appeared to be absolutely vital to prevent any inroad, by Private Bills, upon that province which public legislation had already occupied. If this Bill had been introduced as a Public Bill he should have offered no objection to the second reading. It was said there was a difficulty in passing a Public Bill; but that suggestion only added to the force of the objection. It was important to take care that, because there was a difficulty, Private Bills were not introduced instead of Public Bills. In the case of a Public Bill, every man was supposed to have notice; but of Private Bills no public or general notice was given. A Public Bill was publicly debated, in both Houses, in all its stages; but a Bill like the present would not be considered at all, except in a Select Committee, without opponents. Those Private Bills were scarcely ever circulated; and when they passed they were not printed with the Public Statutes. Was it true that this Bill contained provisions which encroached on the province of public legislation? He thought it did, in several ways. It would affect, throughout the Kingdom, the rights of landlords and creditors. According to one of the clauses of the Bill, when the Association was going to lend money to a tenant it must give 14 days' notice to the landlord, who, if he pleased, might refuse his consent. That applied only to tenancies of over 12 months' duration. When the landlord received the notice he might know nothing about the Act, or anything connected with it; and before he could consult his solicitor the time for objecting under the Act might have expired, or else his solicitor would have no more time than might be left of the 14 days to make all necessary inquiries about the matter. If the tenancy was for 12 months, or any less period, the landlord was only at liberty to object to the transaction on one or other of two grounds. One was that the tenant was bound, by his covenants, not to do those things, for which he proposed to borrow the money. In the great majority of cases that was not likely to be the case; and therefore that ground might be put aside. The other ground was that the tenancy would be determined within 12 months; so that, in order to enable the landlord to object on that ground, he must turn out his tenant, which, otherwise, he might not have wished to do. If objection were made on either of the grounds mentioned, the Company could take the matter to the County Court, which would determine whether the objection was to hold good. But, supposing no objection were made, various rights were conferred on the Company,

which were at variance with the public law. He would first take the case of the landlord dealt with by the 33rd section.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: It has been withdrawn.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, then, of course, his objection to that clause disappeared. If the other clauses to which similar objections in principle applied were also withdrawn, his objections would also be withdrawn. He would next take the case of a creditor of a person to whom money had been lent by the Company, and this brought out in the strongest possible way the objection of principle. The 31st and 32nd sections practically said that, if the occupiers in possession, having the apparent ostensible ownership of everything upon the land, became bankrupt, the ordinary law was to be entirely set aside, and the general creditors were to be altogether postponed, and absolute preference was to be given to this Company. This was to be done not by a Public Act, but by a private measure, about which tradesmen could know nothing, and in respect of which no communication was to be made to them. The effect of this change would be that an agricultural tenant would be empowered to enter into a contract with the Company by which he could prefer them to all his other creditors, and give them a preferential security on all his present and future movables and farming live and dead stock. All he could say was, that if that were a proper thing to do for the protection of agriculture, it ought to be done by public legislation, and the change in the law should be considered in all its bearings in both Houses of Parliament. The noble Marquess had stated that the principle of this Act had been embodied in some Private Acts already passed. It was impossible to say how far that was the case without an examination of those Acts. For his part, he had never heard of any private legislation being proposed before which superseded the Bankruptcy Act; and he might point out that in some of the Acts to which reference had been made, before an advance could be made it was necessary to obtain the sanction of a public Department — the Enclosure Commissioners; and all that was then done was to charge the property in the land against reversioners, if the Commissioners thought that they would derive benefit from the proposed improvements. One Act which had been referred to—that of the West of England Drainage Company — was in itself a warning. It enabled loans to be granted on the security of land, to ecclesiastical as well as other persons, without any of the usual and proper safeguards for the protection of the interests of successors; and one particular clergyman, without any ecclesiastical consent or oversight, mortgaged his glebe to the full extent of its value to the Company. Last Session the most rev. Primate (the Archbishop of Canterbury) had to come to Parliament for a general Public Act, which was passed to prevent such mischief occurring in the future.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH said, that he could not endorse what the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack had said with regard to Private Bill legislation. He thought that some of the most efficient work done in that House was the initiation of private legislation, especially on the subject of the landed interest of the country. While it was necessary for an Act of this sort to be publicly debated and considered in all its bearings, it was not absolutely essential for a measure of this sort to fulfil those conditions to quite the same extent as a Public Bill. The noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack had criticized the main blots of the Bill; but one observation could be made with respect to some of the loans to tenants. It was thought very objectionable by some persons to admit the principle of lending to tenants on standing crops, for they said that if a tenant were in such a position that he required to borrow on standing crops he was not in a proper condition to borrow at all. In the case of expensive crops, such as hops and beetroot, when the tenant's capital was insufficient, the assistance of the landlord would be very advantageous. For that reason, it appeared to him that there would be advantage in considering this measure on its merits before a Select Committee. Evidence would be taken to show what would be the best means of promoting a scheme which would meet the requirements of the situation. The situation with regard to agriculture was undoubtedly a serious one. They had not been able to get a Royal Commission to

inquire into it; but their Lordships would admit that there was no industry in the country which so much required an inquiry at the present time. He ventured to think that if this Bill were referred to a Select Committee much valuable information might be obtained with regard to the best means of dealing with the question.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I cannot say that the arguments of the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack have convinced me. He has addressed himself almost entirely to technicalities, and those not of a very important character, contained in the Bill. He dwelt very much, almost playing with words, upon what he called the privacy of a Private Bill, and said that there was no sufficient opportunity of discussing a private measure. The procedure in a Private Bill is exactly similar to that in the case of a Public Bill, with the exception that it is submitted to a Select Committee in addition. It passes through all its stages in this House like any other Bill, and its contents are discussed in this House, not only as a matter of form, but in practice also. When the noble and learned Earl talks of no notice being received of such a Bill being passed, and of its being passed secretly, my impression is that more publicity has been given to this Bill than to most Bills that come before us. The noble and learned Earl has rested very much upon the grievances of the landlord, and the fact that he is only to have a fortnight's notice. I quite admit that that is too short; but I think that the second reading of a Bill is hardly the occasion on which to discuss a question of detail of that description. It is contrary to all our practice to make a consideration like this the ground for rejecting the second reading of a Bill; it is easy to rectify any such error in Committee. The noble and learned Earl practically did not deal with the Preference Clause at all. It appears to me that you have passed Bill after Bill doing for the owner precisely what you are now asked to do for the occupier, giving him priority for money lent for improvements. When you were being asked to give advantages to the owner, you never discovered all these technicalities. The recommendation to pass such a Bill as this as a public measure is utterly impracticable, and has no meaning whatever. I regret that the noble and learned Earl, and I presume Her Majesty's Government, have taken this view with respect to a measure which has undoubtedly an object of very great interest in view. I do not think, however, that there has been sufficient support of the measure in this House to justify me in pressing the second reading to a division.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL) desired to say, on the part of the Agricultural Department, that he had approached the consideration of this Bill with great interest, and with an intention, if possible, of supporting it. At the same time, it was impossible—and he thought most of their Lordships would feel that it was impossible—to resist the arguments of the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack against the Bill on its present lines and in its present form. The noble and learned Earl had certainly taken objection to some of the details of the Bill; but he could not agree with the noble Marquess that the noble and learned Earl had rested his chief objection to the Bill upon any of these details rather than on much broader grounds. He could only say that if this Bill had been a public one he should have voted for it with great pleasure and satisfaction, although feeling that there would have been necessity for considerable change in Committee.

On question, *resolved* in the *negative*.

BURMAH—RENEWAL OF DIPLOMATIC ARRANGEMENTS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether it is intended to renew diplomatic relations with the Kingdom of Burmah? The noble Viscount said, he would only add a few words to express a hope that the Government were giving full consideration—which he had no reason to doubt—to the important subject of the relation of this country with Burmah. He would ask, further, whether the reports were correct as to the action of the Chinese in conjunction with the Burmese in restoring the authority of Burmah at Bhamo; and, also, whether it was true that Sir William Hewett had been ordered to go up the Irrawaddy? He

thought he need hardly remind the noble Earl how important it was that this country should have a predominant position with respect either to a change of dynasty in Burmah or to the action of Foreign Powers.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, that, as their Lordships would be aware, diplomatic relations with Burmah had been broken off in 1879. In 1882 an ineffectual attempt had been made to renew them. At the present time he would only state that the subject was engaging the most careful attention of the Viceroy. He was in communication with the Viceroy; but he was not in a position to say what the Viceroy might think it right to do in the matter. With regard to the other matter, he had no information whatever as to the report with reference to the action of the Burmese and Chinese at Bhamo. Neither had he heard anything as to any expedition of Sir William Hewett up the Irrawaddy.

NAVY — CHILDREN OF WARRANT OFFICERS—THE COMPASSIONATE FUND.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, who had the following Notice on the Paper:—

"To ask the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether any allowance from the Compassionate Fund for the children of warrant officers is to be granted; and, if so, whether the grant will be extended, as in the case of other officers, to all orphan children?"

said, he would not have asked the Question had he been aware that, to a certain extent, it had been already answered in "another place." He would now vary the Question, and ask whether the noble Earl could state when an answer would be given: and whether the claims of all or any of the children would be taken into consideration?

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK, in reply, said, that an allowance would be granted to all children of warrant officers who lost their lives in and by the Service, whether they were killed in action or not.

ARMY ADMINISTRATION.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

VISCOUNT BURY, in rising to move for the following Returns:—

"(1) Return of the titles of the Acts of Parliament at present in force for the regulation of matters connected with the Army; showing the clauses of each Act which have been repealed by subsequent legislation; (2) a list of the Orders in Council now in force for the government of the Army; (3) a list, with dates, of the several volumes of Royal Warrants and of Regulations issued by authority of the Secretary of State for the administration of the Army and now in force; (4) a list of the Reports of Royal Commissions or of special Committees on Army matters which have been presented to Parliament since the year 1872; (5) Returns of the terms for enlistment, discharge, extension of service with or without pension, transfer to the Reserve, extension of reserve service, or re-engagement for the reserve that existed in 1879 at the time of Lord Airey's Committee, and the terms in force at the present time for the same—namely, the enlistment, discharge, transfer to the reserve, extension of reserve service or re-engagement for the reserve; periods of service that give title to pension, and the amount of such pension; also the provision made for the families of reserve soldiers when their husbands are with the colours; and if any persons are charged with the duty of affording assistance to the families of reserve soldiers in case of need during the absence of their husbands,"

said, that he was placed in a position of some difficulty. The Motion for the first four of these Returns had been placed on the Paper by himself, and he could speak about them; but the others were moved by the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Napier of Magdala), who was now unable through indisposition to be present. The Motions had been joined because the discussion of them would otherwise have been separated by several other subjects. The Motion which he himself now brought forward was necessitated, because from 1871 down to the present time there had been a constant succession of changes in the constitution of the Army, which had left it, he did not say now whether in a worse or in a better position than it was before, but certainly in a totally different position. From 1871, when Lord Cardwell began his reforms in the Army, almost all the changes that were made were embodied in Acts of Parliament, in Royal Warrants, and in General Orders. Large sums of money were spent in abolishing purchase, and in establishing depôt centres. Lord Cardwell's changes involved the absolute destruction of the system which they superseded. Each successive War Minister was compelled, whether he liked it or not, to develop the new plan, some parts of which were found not easily workable. It was impossible for any Minister, whatever his opinions might be, to resist the plea that the new system

required time to prove its effects, or to induce his Colleagues to sacrifice the more than £3,500,000 that were expended on the depôt centres, or to face any new succession of organic changes in the constitution of the Army. At no time was it possible after 1872 to go back to the old Army system, which was entirely destroyed — its bones, so to speak, having been buried. When Lord Cardwell introduced this scheme in 1872 he had been fortified by the Localization Committee, which dealt with two classes of subjects —the one destructive, the other constructive. The destructive parts of the scheme had been entirely successful—that was to say, the existing Army system was wholly demolished. The constructive parts of the scheme were not so effective, hardly any of them having yet been carried out. Lord Cardwell took care to embody all his changes in Acts of Parliament, and successive Secretaries of State had since then had no choice but to obey the law. Each of them had tried to make the system work, and had taken certain steps which, whether they were right or wrong, were absolutely irrevocable. Each of them might, in fact, be said to have broken up the ground behind him. Before Lord Cardwell's changes, or in 1871, the Votes for the Army amounted to about £16,000,000 per annum. The Army Estimates had remained at pretty much the same sum ever since At that time enlistment was for 21 years, at the end of which term a pension was obtained; recruiting was found to be difficult, hardly sufficient men coming in to make up for the waste in the Army. In fact, even lowering the standard and giving large bounties scarcely enabled them to get enough men for the Service. Therefore, it must be acknowledged that the state of the Army in Lord Cardwell's time was very unsatisfactory, and it was quite right to apply some strong and even drastic remedy to it. There was no Reserve Lord Cardwell's plan was to abolish purchase, to secure the necessary flow of promotion by the compulsory retirement of officers, and to give promotion by seniority, tempered by selection. Pension to the rank and file was entirely done away with, an endeavour was made to create a Reserve by passing men after three years' service in the ranks into the Reserve, and the main feature of the scheme was to localize the Army and to establish what was now called the Depôt Brigade system—to identify regiments with various localities for recruiting and training, connecting the Regulars, the Auxiliaries, and the Reserves with the Forces actually serving under the standard. That system was based on the number of battalions—namely, 141, which then happened to exist in the Army; and its smooth working depended on the possibility of retaining exactly 71 battalions always in England and 70 abroad, any disturbance of that proportion involving the complete dislocation of the scheme. Now, on no occasion since then had that proportion been kept up; and Lord Cardwell's original scheme, from beginning to end, though nominally adopted, had never been really carried out. The scheme was embodied first in the Regulation of the Forces Bill of 1871, which was three times remodelled before it passed. First, the whole Bill, except as to the abolition of purchase, was withdrawn. Then the abolition of purchase clauses were thrown out in their Lordships' House. Then those clauses were carried into effect by Royal Warrant, and in the same month of 1871 the noble Duke (the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) moved a Resolution declaring that the amended Bill was read the second time only on account of the clauses securing compensation to officers; and that Bill was at last carried only in the shape of clauses giving compensation to officers. Shortly afterwards came what was called the Localization Committee, which presented three successive Reports, and subsequently the Localization Act was passed, £3,500,000 sterling being granted for the building of barracks at the various depôt centres. In that year also a General Order was issued to the Army giving effect to the recommendation of the Localization Committee, and containing instructions for the officers appointed to command in connection with the localization of the Forces. In 1874 there was a change of Government. At that time there were in active operation the Army and Militia Reserve Act of 1867, the Regulation of the Forces Act of 1871, the Localization Act of 1872, and the General Order of 1873. In 1875 Mr. Gathorne Hardy appointed the well-known Militia Committee of which Lord Stanley was Chair-

man. That Committee propounded a scheme similar in many respects to that adopted by Mr. Childers. Mr. Hardy also appointed Sir Daniel Lysons's Committee to examine the brigade depôts; and in the same year, when preparations were made in prospect of the war with Russia, a Committee was appointed on the mobilization of the Army. In 1878 Mr. Hardy appointed General Armstrong's Committee on the short-service system. On the recommendation of that Committee, the whole system of rewards and punishments had been framed to meet the requirements of the old long-service system, which were set aside and remodelled in order to suit the circumstances of the new system of Mr. Cardwell. In 1879 Colonel Stanley succeeded Mr. Hardy, and he appointed Lord Airey's Committee in consequence of the difficulties which had been found in the working of the short-service system. That Committee might be said to represent the military opinion of the day. Their recommendations were not presented to Parliament for a considerable time—in fact, they were not presented until Mr. Childers had matured and laid before Parliament his new scheme in March, 1882, while moving the Army Estimates. He need not enter into an examination of that scheme, because it was the scheme upon which the Army was at present regulated. His object in giving this brief history of the Army changes from 1871 until the present time was to show their Lordships that there were a series of Acts of Parliament, of General Orders, of Royal Warrants, and of Orders in Council which overlapped each other to such an extent that no one could make head or tail of the mass. Officers did not know how they stood, nor under what Regulations they came. There might be a mass of books for them to consult; but it was nearly impossible for them to find out whether a certain Royal Warrant or General Order had been wholly or partially repealed by some subsequent legislation, and, indeed, unless in the case of such experts as his noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for War, no officer could exactly say under what Regulations the Army at present existed. It was necessary, therefore, that there should be laid before their Lordships such information as that he had indicated, and that there should be in the possession of officers of the Army a single Return from which they and others interested in the administration of the Army might gather the exact position of legislative enactments by which the Army was controlled. If the Returns for which he asked, as well as the Return asked for by his noble and gallant Friend the Field Marshal, were granted, as he hoped they would be, there would be in the hands of officers in the Army and of those interested in its government a compendious book of reference by which the actual condition of affairs might be thoroughly known.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for,

"1. Return of the titles of the Acts of Parliament at present in force for the regulation of matters connected with the Army; showing the clauses of each Act which have been repealed by subsequent legislation;

"2. A list of the Orders in Council now in force for the government of the Army;

"3. A list, with dates, of the several volumes of Royal Warrants and of Regulations issued by authority of the Secretary of State for the administration of the Army and now in force;

"4. A list of the Reports of Royal Commissions or of Special Committees on Army matters which have been presented to Parliament since the year 1872;

"5. Returns of the terms for enlistment, discharge, extension of service with or without pension, transfer to the Reserve, extension of reserve service, or re-engagement for the reserve, that existed in 1879 at the time of Lord Airey's Committee, and the terms in force at the present time for the same; namely, the enlistment, discharge, transfer to the reserve, extension of reserve service, or re-engagement for the reserve." – (*The Viscount Bury.*)

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he was unable to trace any connection between the historical retrospect given by the noble Viscount and the Motion of which he had given Notice. The only object he could conceive the noble Viscount had in making his statement was to show the system was introduced by Lord Cardwell, and to prove that because subsequent War Ministers were unable to depart from it he (Viscount Bury) was to be acquitted from any responsibility in having to carry it out. He had no difficulty in acquitting the noble Viscount of that responsibility. The noble Viscount, towards the conclusion of his speech, complained that there was a good deal of confusion as to the documents, whether General Orders or Acts of Parliament, by which the Army was governed. He had no objection to produce the Returns asked for; indeed, the Motion

had, to some extent, been anticipated, and the documents were in such a forward state of preparation that they would probably be presented to the House in a few days. He thought, however, the noble Lord somewhat exaggerated the confusion to officers and others interested in the Army arising from the number of documents dealing with its administration. He did not seem to be aware that the documents regulating the Army were infinitely more simple in their character than they had been in any former period. With one or two exceptions, the legislation affecting the Army was up to date. It was contained in 12 volumes of Regulations, eight of which were confined to departmental arrangements. It seemed to him, therefore, that the criticisms of the noble Viscount referred more appropriately to the old days, when there was no such thing as the consolidating of Warrants. At present there was no confusion whatever. The Warrants were perfectly clear, consolidation took place from time to time, and every officer could not fail to obtain with very little trouble the information he wanted. There was another volume to which he would like to refer; it was a manual of military law issued on the authority of the War Department. The book had been drawn up by an able legal authority, embodying the Acts of Parliament and dissertations on military law regulating the Army up to date. The price of the book was 2*s.* 6*d.*, so it was not beyond the reach of noble Lords who were interested. The Returns asked for by the noble and gallant Lord the Field Marshal had already been placed before the House in a very convenient form. The noble Viscount's Motion concluded with a reference to a Return, though in reality it was rather in the nature of a Question, as to the payment which the wives of Reserve soldiers would receive while their husbands were with the Colours. He did not think that that was a subject for a Return; but he would give the noble Viscount what information he could. The wives of Reserve men with the Colours would receive the same allowances as were received by the wives of soldiers serving abroad—namely, 8*d.* a-day, with 2*d.* a-day for each child up to a certain age. These sums were calculated on the foreign rate, and not on the home rate, which was much smaller; and he believed no complaint had been made as to the way in which the wives of Reserve men would be dealt with. There was no such organization as the noble Viscount suggested for relieving the wives and families of Reserve men in case of need; and he failed to see how such an organization could be established. The families of Reserve soldiers were scattered all over the country, and the task of relieving them in case of need must devolve on local administrations in the places where these people resided. In conclusion, the noble Earl said he hoped he should be able shortly to lay upon the Table of the House the Returns for which the noble Viscount had moved.

The Earl of GALLOWAY wanted to know whether it was proposed to give effect to that part of the original scheme which provided that when the two battalions of one regiment were both abroad a third battalion should be formed at home? That part of the scheme had never yet been carried out.

The Earl of MORLEY said, he must protest against the extraordinary irregularity of asking a Question on a Motion with which it had nothing whatever to do; but he had no objection to answer it. When it was thought desirable, no doubt, the depôt could be, and was in several cases, increased in numbers. Of course, the Military Advisers of the Crown were guided by the circumstances in which wars were carried on.

The Earl of WEMYSS expressed his satisfaction with the announcement that the Returns moved for by his noble Friend would, as far as possible, be granted.

Motion *agreed to.*

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 13*th March,* 1885.

MINUTES: Supply—*considered in Committee* — *Resolutions* [12th March] *reported.*
Public Bills — *Ordered*—Peasant Proprietary and Acquisition of Land by Occupiers No. 2 * *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Industrial Schools (Ireland * [96].

Second Reding—Referred to a Select Committee—Registration (Occupation Voters) [63].
Committee—Parliamentary Elections Redistribution (re-com'n) [49]—R.P. [*Fourth Night*].
Considered as amended—Third Reading — Elections in Counties (Hours of Poll) [85], and *passed*.
Withdrawn—Peasant Proprietary and Acquisition of Land by Occupiers [43].

QUESTIONS.

—o—

CIVIL SERVANTS IN BANKRUPTCY—CASE OF MR. JOHN KIRWAN—ORDER OF COURT OF BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND).

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the Bankruptcy Court in Ireland recently ordered that a sum of £40 per annum should be set aside from the salary of John Sligo Kirwan, who is Government Cattle Inspector for the Port of Belfast, to liquidate a claim of £100 due to the National Bank of Ireland; and, whether the Government have refused to conform to the degere of the Bankruptcy Court; and, if so, can they give a reason, and also will they reconsider their decision?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It is true that an order allocating part of Mr. Kirwan's salary has been made by the Court of Bankruptcy; but it is not true that the Government have refused to conform to it. The order was incorrect in describing Mr. Kirwan as an officer of the Privy Council instead of the Veterinary Department. This was pointed out to the Solicitor of the Official Assignee on the 3rd ultimo, and he has not since replied. I should add that the Veterinary Department are at present in communication with the Treasury on the point whether Mr. Kirwan's is a case coming under the Rules affecting Civil servants in pecuniary difficulties.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH, ST. PANCRAS.

MR. FIRTH asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the circumstances attending the resignation of Dr. Murphy as the Medical Officer of Health for St Pancras; whether there is any ground for the statement made in his letter of resignation that "exceptional and unscrupulous means" have been adopted to prevent the carrying on of effectual sanitary work, and to discredit him in his contest with those who were affected by his condemnation of insanitary property in St. Pancras; and, if such statement is true, whether he proposes to take any steps in the matter?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: We have no information as to the circumstances attending the resignation of Dr. Murphy except that furnished by his letter which has appeared in a local newspaper. So far as we are in a position to form any opinion on the subject, Dr. Murphy has discharged his duties as Medical Officer of Health with great efficiency. The action of the Vestry with regard to the Medical Officer of Health is in no way subject to the jurisdiction of the Board; and we cannot, therefore, intervene.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT—ARMS' LICENCES—CASE OF JAMES LORD, MOUNT NUGENT, CO. CAVAN.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that at the time James Lord, of Mount Nugent, county Cavan, got a licence to carry arms he was not holder of any land; and, if not, what notice will he take of the conduct of the two magistrates who certified he was a landholder?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears that James Lord was not a holder of land at the time when he got his licence. The certificate which described him as a farmer was therefore erroneous in this respect; but it is reasonable to suppose that the point to which the magistrates were directing their attention was the fitness of the applicant to carry arms rather than the exact description of him in the form, and as Lord is stated to be a young man of excellent character, who would probably have obtained a licence on such a recommendation whether he was a farmer or not, I am disposed to regard the matter as an oversight which calls for no further action.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. W. W. NEWENHAM, CO. CORK.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether William Worth Newenham, a

Militia captain and magistrate of the county of Cork, after dining with the resident magistrate, Mr. Arthur Mitchel, on the 22nd of January last at Cork, was found about midnight on that occasion drunk and misconducting himself in Winthrop Street by Constables Carroll and Lockhart, who took him prisoner to Tuckey Street Guardhouse; whether Mr. Newenham assaulted the police, and tore the tunic belonging to one of them; whether Mr. Newenham behaved in a most violent manner, shouting at the top of his voice that he was an Orangeman, a Freemason, and a magistrate of the county of Cork; and that he had got drunk in the company of the resident magistrate, before whom he ordered the police to bring him; whether the police, instead of lodging Mr. Newenham in Bridewell in the usual course, to be dealt with next morning by the city justices, brought him to the City Club before Mr. Mitchel, R.M. who discharged the prisoner, remarking that it was a case for a summons; whether it is the fact that no summons has been since issued; if so, why has a summons not been issued; whether the subsequent correspondence between Messrs. Mitchel and Newenham will be laid upon the Table; whether the police made a report of the matter to their superiors; if so, what is the purport of that report; and, whether the Government will retain Messrs. Mitchel and Newenham in the Commission of the Peace?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The incident to which this Question has reference occurred on the 15th, not the 22nd January. At about 11 P.M. on the day I have named Captain Newenham was brought in custody to the club where the Resident Magistrate was, and charged with attempting to assault a policeman. The Resident Magistrate ordered his discharge, and told the police they might proceed by summons. The case was subsequently investigated by the police authorities, who came to the conclusion that it was not desirable to move further in the matter, and it was allowed to drop. It is not true that Captain Newenham had dined with the Resident Magistrate that evening. Captain Newenham was not drunk, nor are the other particulars of conduct ascribed to him true. He did not desire the police to bring him before the Resident Magistrate, and no correspondence whatever on the subject has passed between him and Mr. Mitchel.

MR. O'KELLY: Will the right hon. Gentleman, then, be kind enough to say why Captain Newenham was arrested?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: He was arrested for an attempt to assault the police.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Why did he attempt to assault the police?

[No reply.]

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1884—REGISTRATION OF ELECTORS.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, If the Government have considered whether the fifteen days now allowed by Law to town clerks (7th to 22nd July) is sufficient this year for the preparation of the Parliamentary Voters List in view of the influx of new voters, and will they communicate with the town clerks of the eight boroughs left under the Seats Bill on the subject?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): This subject has been under the consideration of the Irish Government. We are already in possession of the views of the Town Clerk of Dublin. The matter will receive careful attention.

MR. HEALY: Will the other town clerks be consulted?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) was understood to say that he thought they would.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE IN NORFOLK.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether his attention has been called to a statement reported, in the *Evening Standard* of the 3rd instant, to have been made by the Earl of Suffolk, the Chairman at a Council Meeting of the Central and Associated Chambers of Agriculture, as to the recent outbreak of foot and mouth disease in Norfolk, in the following terms:—

"No disease had existed in the district before, and there was evidence which justified them in believing that the pig, while in London, had taken the infection from the diseased sheep brought from Germany."

and, whether it is a fact that the pig referred to was taken to Swaffham on 12th January, and that the first cargo of sheep from Germany, in which the disease appeared, arrived on 11th February?

MR. TREVELYAN: The pig referred to was taken to Swaffham on the 12th of January. The first cargo of sheep from Germany in which one sheep was found to be affected with foot-and-mouth disease was landed at Deptford on February 11. As a matter of fact, the pig never came nearer London than Clapham Junction. It appears, from a full report of Lord Suffolk's speech, that his Lordship acquitted the pig of the charge of having contracted the disease from a German source.

MR. CHAPLIN asked whether, between the passing of the Act of last year and February 11, during which time animals were continually imported from Germany, the disease did not exist in Germany?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is impossible to say that disease did not exist in Germany during the period referred to; but out of 500,000 sheep introduced from Germany in the course of 12 months only two of them were known to have been affected by foot-and-mouth disease.

MR. CHAPLIN: Do I understand that the disease prevails at the present moment in Germany?

MR. TREVELYAN: It prevails at the present moment in Germany—that is to say, it exists.

SEEDS SUPPLY (IRELAND) ACT—REPAYMENT OF LOANS.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the Local Government Board has impounded the rates of the Kildysart (county Clare) Union to the extent of £905, due on account of the Seeds Supply (Ireland) Act; if, previous to adopting this course, the local guardians had definitely refused to liquidate the debt; in how many instances has a similar course been adopted by the Local Government Board; and, if the total outstanding amount on account of the Seeds Act can be stated?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The Local Government Board have impounded the rates of Kildysart Union to the extent of £905, due under the Seeds Supply (Ireland) Act, and they were bound by the Act to do so. The Guardians had not definitely refused, but they had failed to liquidate their debt, although allowed a considerable extension of time beyond the date at which the sum was due. The Board have been obliged to exercise their compulsory powers in 58 similar instances. The total amount now outstanding for seed loans is £106,597 4*s*. 4*d*.

MR. KENNY: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to convey that in 58 other Unions the Local Government Board impounded the rates?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No; I do not know to what extent the Local Government Board exercises their powers.

MR. KENNY: I will put a further Question on the subject.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—ENNISTYMON UNION.

MR. KENNY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Local Government Board has come to a decision with regard to an excessive charge upon the Ennistymon (county Clare) Union, for an inquiry under "The Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1883;" if he is aware that the Ennistymon Board of Guardians has recently passed a resolution strongly disapproving of the action of the Local Government Board in sanctioning such a charge, and add,

"The Board of Guardians, with reluctance, have to observe that in this matter a disregard for the welfare of both labourers and ratepayers has been apparent on the part of the Local Government Board;"

and, if any action will be taken to punish those officials of the Board or others who have made an excessive or fraudulent charge for their services?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I explained, in reply to a Question of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) on the 4th of December last, that the sum which the Local Government Board have called on the Guardians to pay in this instance is made up of the cost of advertising an inquiry under the Labourers' Act, and of the expenses of a shorthand writer. The Guardians have since admitted their liability for the advertisements; but they still dispute the item for the shorthand writer. There is, however, no other source from which

the payment can be made. The charge was made according to a scale fixed by the Treasury, and the allegations in the last paragraph of the hon. Member's Question are absolutely unwarranted.

GENERAL GORDON'S TELEGRAMS

MR. BOURKE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Copies of Telegrams which General Gordon sent to Sir E. Baring and others during the last few months of the siege of Khartoum have reached the Government; and, when will they be laid before Parliament?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir Evelyn Baring forwarded by the mail which arrived last Monday some letters addressed to himself by General Gordon, and bearing date the 9th of November and 12th and 13th of December last. They are now being printed, and I do not think there will be any objection to lay them on the Table with any that may be subsequently received.

GENERAL GORDON'S DIARIES.

MR. BOURKE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Sixth Volume of General Gordon's Diaries, which left Korti on the 16th, has reached the Government; and, whether this volume will be sent to General Gordon's representatives?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The sixth volume of General Gordon's diaries has been received. A letter has also been received from General Gordon, which shows clearly what were his wishes with regard to these journals. It is addressed to the Chief of the Staff of the Soudan Expeditionary Force, and is dated November 10, 1884. It says—

"Since departure, 10th September, of Lieut.-Colonel Stewart, C.M.G., I have kept a daily journal of all events at Khartoum, which contains also my private opinions on certain facts, which, perhaps, it is just as well you should know confidentially. You can, of course, make extracts of all official matter, and will naturally leave my private opinions out in the case of publication. I have already sent five portions of this journal, and now send the sixth portion."

That ends the letter. The official extracts referred to will be published as soon as possible. The whole diary will be handed over to his relatives, and we shall confer with them as to what portions it is desirable to include in the official extracts.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—MR. JOHN ECCLES, PETTY SESSION CLERK, PORTADOWN.

MR. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the conduct of Mr. John Eccles, Clerk of the Petty Sessions at Portadown, who, during the hearing of a case by the magistrates, there stated in open Court that a man named Patrick Byrne, who was about to be examined as a witness, was not to be believed on his oath; and, whether it is intended to tolerate such conduct on the part of Mr. Eccles, or what course it is intended to adopt towards him?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It appears that the Petty Sessions Clerk did make the observation referred to, and in consequence an action was brought against him by Patrick Byrne, which he settled by payment of a sum of money. Mr. Eccles at the time thought it his duty to make the statement to the Bench which he did, but afterwards regretted it. The Lord Lieutenant has given directions that he shall be censured for his conduct.

RAILWAY RATES AND CHARGES.

MR. ROLLS asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he has received any and what reply from the Railway Companies to his suggestion or request that the Bills for Revision of Rates should be withdrawn; and, whether he is now prepared to state the course he intends to take or advise with reference to these Bills in the event of their not being withdrawn?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I have to thank the hon. Member for his courtesy in postponing this Question; and as the subject is one of very great interest and importance perhaps the House will allow me some little latitude in making a statement on the matter. The House will recollect that the subject of the classification of railway terminals was dealt with by the Railway Rates Committee in 1882; and they recommended, among other things, that one uniform classification of goods should be adopted for the whole railway system, and that the terminal charges should be recognized, subject to their publication by the Companies, and, in case of challenge, to the sanction of the Railway

Commissioners. Last year the Government brought in a Bill dealing with the whole subject of railway legislation, and they endeavoured to carry out these recommendations of the Railway Committee in a clause in that Bill, the important part of which in reference to this subject I may quote—

"It shall be lawful for a Railway Company to charge a reasonable sum for terminals subject in case of dispute to the sanction of the Commissioners, who may prescribe the manner in which the scale of such terminals shall be published. The provisions contained in this section with respect to such terminals shall not apply to any Railway Company until such Company has submitted to Parliament a revised classification of rates and a revised schedule of maximum rates, nor until such revised classification and schedule have been approved by Parliament."

I have seen it stated that the Board of Trade are responsible for the Bills referred to in the Question, and I suppose that opinion has arisen from the terms of the Bill introduced by the Government last year. But I may point out that the provision in the Bill is one of a number of concurrent provisions; and it does not follow that because it would be right to pass a Bill dealing generally with railway grievances it would be right to take out one particular subject and deal with it separately from all the rest. I have also to state that the Board of Trade is not in any way committed to the details of the particular Bills which are now before the House. These are nine in number, and I am informed that they deal altogether with no less than 381 Acts of Parliament, and also with the rates and charges upon something like 28,000 articles. It will, I think, be evident to the House that if these Bills had been generally accepted by the traders as a fair basis for the settlement of this rather difficult and complicated question, it might be very well to refer them to a strong Hybrid Committee, which would have been, in that case, able to deal with any disputed points which might have remained over. Unfortunately, that has not been the case, and it must be clear from recent agitation that the trades generally, either because the Bills are in themselves objectionable, or owing to some misapprehension as to their provisions, are entirely opposed to these Bills. Under these circumstances, there would be so much contentious matter to be laid before a Parliamentary Committee that I confess it is almost impossible to suppose that within any reasonable time any Parliamentary Committee could deal with the vast number of questions that would be presented to it. It was under these circumstances that I received, a short time ago, a communication from my hon. Friend the Member for Banbury (Sir Bernhard Samuelson), who, speaking on his own behalf and on behalf of a very influential Committee of Members of both Houses of Parliament, who had been selected to represent the interest of the traders, suggested that this was a matter which ought, in the first instance, and before any legislation on the subject was attempted to be inquired into by some efficient tribunal, and my hon. Friend suggested that the Railway Commission would be the natural tribunal for such an inquiry. I must say that I thought such a suggestion was one which deserved very careful and even favourable consideration, and I have since been in communication with the Railway Companies on the subject. I was very anxious to have the assent, and the willing assent, of the Railway Companies to any proposal of the kind, because I felt that if an inquiry of this kind were forced upon either party it would probably be unduly prolonged, and we could hardly hope that the Report, when received, would be as satisfactory a basis for legislation as it would be if it were the result of an amicable arrangement entered into between the two parties. I have seen the representatives of the Railway Companies on several occasions, and for the last time this morning, when the Chairmen and officials of some of the leading lines were good enough to wait upon me, and I am glad to say the Railway Companies assent to the principle of the inquiry which has been proposed; but there is still some difference of opinion as to what should be the character of the tribunal. The Railway Companies, as I understand, agree that the Railway Commission must be the nucleus of such a tribunal, and they think that it would be right and proper that two representatives of the traders and two of the Companies respectively, as suggested by my hon. Friend the Member for Banbury, should be added to the Commission, as expert Commissioners, to assist them in coming to a conclusion. They think, also, that it is desirable that the Commission should be further strengthened

by the addition of the names of one or two gentlemen of independent and great position, who would command the confidence both of the traders and of the Railway Companies. I have had some little experience in forming Commissions, and I am bound to say that I have found it on previous occasions very difficult to please all parties, and I am not very hopeful of being able to find gentlemen of the position and character desired by the Railway Companies who would be willing to undertake such a laborious and difficult technical task as that proposed, and who would, at the same time, enjoy the full confidence both of the traders and the Railway Companies. The matter, however, is one for further consideration; but if it should prove impossible to find such gentlemen, then I confess, speaking for myself, my opinion is that it would be desirable that these Bills should be referred to a Commission, appointed according to the suggestions I have already referred to, and consisting of the Railway Commissioners and the four experts added, and that they should be instructed to inquire into the railway charges with the view to see how far the Bills before the House provide a satisfactory settlement, and if they do not, in what way they should be modified. I hope, under these circumstances, the Bills will not be proceeded with.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: Has the right hon Gentleman found any difficulty on the part of the Railway Companies in defining the scope and the duties of the Commission?

MR. CAUSTON: As none of these Bills deal with the question of preferential rates on foreign goods, will that question be referred to the Commission? The right hon. Gentleman is aware that the agricultural interest suffers greatly upon the subject.

MR. R. H. PAGET: The right hon. Gentleman has not made a definite reply to the Question on the Paper as to the answer which the Railway Companies have made. We are still in ignorance as to whether they intend to withdraw their Bills.

SIR BERNHARD SAMUELSON: Do I understand correctly that the question to be referred to this Commission, if appointed, will be simply that of rates and charges, and that it will be so referred without prejudice to any more general questions that may arise on railway management?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: In answer to my hon. Friend the Member for South Durham (Sir Joseph Pease), I do not anticipate that there will be any difficulty in coming to an agreement as to the terms of reference. They will be, as my hon. Friend the Member for Banbury (Sir Bernhard Samuelson) has suggested, to inquire into the rates and charges, without prejudice to any other and entirely different questions. That will be my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Colchester (Mr. Causton), for while I admit the extreme importance of preferential rates, yet that is a subject on which we have sufficient information, and which is ripe for legislation when time admits for the introduction and pressing forward of a Bill. As to the Question of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. R. H. Paget), I thought I had given very fully the reply of the Railway Companies. Before giving any definite and final answer they have to consult their constituents; but I am under the impression that they will not, in the end, object to the proposal which has been made, and with regard to the principle of which they have expressed themselves in entire agreement. Under these circumstances, the Bills will not, of course, be proceeded with. If, however, the Railway Companies should think it proper to proceed with the Bills, then I think the House will be able to deal with them.

MR. R. H. PAGET: Are we to understand that this Commission will not include the question of preferential rates?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I thought I made myself quite clear. I said that was not a question to be referred, because it is one which has already been inquired into, and upon which we have sufficient information to be able to legislate as soon as there is time.

MR. TOMLINSON: Will the constitution, functions, and jurisdiction of the Railway Commissioners come within the scope of the inquiry?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir.

MR. HICKS: I should like to ask whether, as the question of through rates from the Continent is not to be submitted to the Commission, it will be dealt with in a Bill to be brought forward after the Commissioners have met?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: It is rather premature to make a statement with regard to legislation which may hereafter be introduced.

MR. CAUSTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman say whether a Bill has been prepared by the Government on the subject of foreign rates? The agricultural interest suffers very much from these rates, especially in the Eastern counties, where they are very unfair?

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH: I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he can throw any more light upon what he considers to be ascertained facts? He says he is ready to introduce a Bill upon the subject of preferential rates; can he say in what sense he has proposed to deal with it?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot give an answer to that Question without making a long speech; but I may say that the whole question was inquired into by the Railway Rates and Fares Committee upstairs, and we have full evidence to enable us to deal with it.

PUBLIC HEALTH—FLACKWELL HEATH WATER SUPPLY.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the defective water supply of the village of Flackwell Heath, near High Wycombe; and, if so, whether the necessary steps have been, or will be, taken to insist that a proper provision shall be made through the agency of the Rural Sanitary Authority?

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL: The Local Government Board have received a complaint as to the water supply of the hamlet of Flackwell Heath, and communicated with the Rural Sanitary Authority on the subject. They, in reply, forwarded Reports from the Medical Officer of Health and Inspector of Nuisances, from which it appears that the dwelling houses are chiefly cottages, scattered over a considerable area; that the cottages, with the exception of about 28, are provided with tanks for the storage of water; and that the Sanitary Authority considers that, where there is no such provision, the owners should be called upon to provide tanks, or in some other way to provide a water supply, instead of the Sanitary Authority undertaking the digging of wells from 200 to 300 feet in depth, as has been suggested. Several new tanks have been provided since attention was directed to the matter. Letters of the Sanitary Authority were forwarded for the information of the complainants, and we yesterday received a Report in reply to the statements of the Sanitary Authority. We are asked to receive a deputation on the subject, and we propose to do so.

THE WEST AFRICAN CONVENTION—INLAND TRANSIT DUTIES.

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether under the West African Convention the Powers have agreed to use their good offices with the territorial Powers on the Coast to obtain favourable terms for transit into the interior; and, if this be true, whether the effect of it at Zanzibar may be that goods imported into the interior by Foreign Powers will be admitted free of Duty, while British goods will be subjected still, under Treaty, to a Duty of five per cent?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: The Powers have agreed to use their good offices to obtain favourable terms for goods in transit. British trade is fully protected by the most favoured nation provision contained in Article I. of the Zanzibar Treaty of May 31, 1839.

NAVY—COMMITTEE ON NAVAL PENSIONS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether Her Majesty's Government will lay upon the Table the instructions given to the Commission presided over by H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh on Pensions to the Widows and Orphans of Seamen and Marines and other Naval Pensions?

MR. CAINE: Premising that a Committee and not a Commission has been appointed to consider the question of making provision for widows, I have to inform the hon. Member that it is not desirable to raise expectations by publishing the instructions, the result of the inquiry being uncertain.

EGYPT—USE OF THE COURBASH.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Globe* of 3rd March, to the effect—

"That, without the usual delays and formalities attending the action of the tribunals, four men belonging to the village of Matarieh were courbashed," the reason given being "the increasing insolence of the Native population towards Englishmen."

and an alleged assault by some of the villagers on two unarmed Hussars; whether inquiry will be made as to the nature of the provocation given by the Hussars; how is it they went about unarmed; and, whether the punishment inflicted on their alleged assailants was not in direct contravention of the undertaking to abolish the courbash?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I can only refer my hon. Friend to the reply which I gave to him last Friday, when I informed him that inquiry would be made as to the facts of this case. A despatch to that effect has been addressed to Sir Evelyn Baring; but sufficient time has not elapsed to allow of a reply having been received.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—GERMANY—EARL GRANVILLE AND COUNT HERBERT BISMARCK.

MR. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Papers will be laid upon the Table disclosing the nature of the negotiations which have lately been carried on between Count Herbert Bismarck and Her Majesty's Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: It was agreed that the conversations between Lord Granville and Count Herbert Bismarck were of a confidential character. Any results which have arisen from them will be placed on record in the usual manner, and will be laid before Parliament.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

MR. CHAPLIN asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether the Privy Council have received information as to any further outbreak or outbreaks of foot and mouth disease quite recently in England?

MR. TREVELYAN: The last outbreak of foot and-mouth disease was reported to the Privy Council on the 7th instant. The disease appeared among a herd consisting of 22 cattle on a farm at Crowland Common, near Spalding. An Inspector of the Privy Council visited the farm on Monday the 9th, and found six of the cattle then affected with the disease. The Local Authorities have been very energetic. The last animals brought into the premises arrived four weeks before the outbreak was detected. There is no evidence to show that they brought the disease with them. This, with the case of Swaffham in Norfolk, makes only two outbreaks of foot and-mouth disease this year, as far as it has gone.

MR. CHAPLIN asked whether, in face of the fact that foot-and-mouth disease prevailed in Germany, the Privy Council were satisfied that the circumstances of that country were such as to afford reasonable security to England, by the continued importation of live animals, against the importation of disease?

MR. TREVELYAN: It is plain we think so, on account of the measures which we have taken and refrained from taking. The fact that it is three weeks since the last sheep were affected with foot-and-mouth disease is a very good proof that the Privy Council were right in not acting more harshly than they did; but, of course, if there is any more importation of diseased animals the Privy Council will very seriously consider the matter.

MR. CHAPLIN said, that in consequence of the reply he had received, and as he could place so little reliance on the Government, he would take the earliest opportunity of calling attention to the subject.

NATIONAL DEBT CONVERSION OF STOCK ACT, 1884.

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he will enlarge the statement he proposes to furnish in reference to the amount of Two and a-Half Per Cents. and Two and Three-quarter Per Cents., so as to exhibit in a convenient form the gross amount so converted under the Act of 1884, distinguishing the amount taken by the public; by his own authority in respect of savings banks, &c.; and by the authority of the Lord Chancellor, or other Department, in respect of Chancery, Bankruptcy, or other funds on deposit?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Yes, Sir. The Return which I have promised to the hon. Member for the City (Mr. Alder-

man Cotton) will give the details the hon. Member desires.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE EDUCATION CODE FOR 1885.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether, in consideration of the rule that the Education Code must lie upon the Table of the House for a period of forty days before it becomes Law (should no Address to the Crown be carried for its Amendment), and that the holidays are included in that period, and of the fact that there are now less than forty days before Easter, he will either defer its introduction till after the holidays or lay it upon the Table at once; whether he will take care that the Code shall be in the hands of Members on the day on which it is laid upon the Table; and, whether he will place in the hands of honourable Members the Department's instructions to their inspectors, as to the interpretation of the Code, at the same time?

MR. MUNDELLA: I have no such option, as to the submission of the Code, as the hon. Gentleman seems to suppose. I am bound, under Article 136, "to lay it on the Table of both Houses within one calendar month from the meeting of Parliament," and I shall do so next week. The statute does not prescribe 40 days, but one month, as the period during which it must lie upon the Table. I will endeavour to arrange for the circulation of the Code as soon as possible after I have presented it. The instructions to Inspectors depend entirely upon the conditions of the Code, and they cannot be issued until the Code has received the sanction of Parliament.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—TRIAL OF THE NEWRY RIOTERS.

MR. O'BRIEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the six Orangemen charged with having fired out of the Orange Hall at Newry at a National procession, with intent to murder, were brought to trial at the last assizes at Belfast, where the panel is principally composed of Orangemen; whether the jury disagreed, and it was afterwards stated that ten were for acquittal, and two for conviction; and, whether it is a fact that the venue has been again changed to Belfast; and, if so, for what purpose, or with what hope of conviction?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER): One of six persons charged with firing with intent to injure out of the Orange Hall at Newry was tried at the Winter Assizes at Belfast. The jury disagreed. I have no authentic information, nor do I consider it right to make inquiries, as to the proportion of jurors for a conviction or an acquittal. The Attorney General has considered it desirable that the cases should not be tried in Down, the locality where they arose, and, after careful inquiry, he has changed the venue to Belfast. He has no reason to believe that a County Antrim jury will not at the next Assizes discharge its duty, or that the panel will be principally composed of Orangemen.

MR. O'BRIEN: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman say if the jury was not composed of Orangemen? Is it not the fact that at the last Belfast Assizes there were only two Catholics on the whole special jury?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER), who was almost inaudible in the Gallery, was understood to say that he did not know how many of the jury were Orangemen.

MR. HEALY: Is it not also intended to try James Mulholland, Nationalist, in Belfast?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER) said, he had no information on the subject.

LAW AND POLICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—ALLEGED CASE OF POACHING—ASHFORD PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to a statement in *The Daily News* of Tuesday last, to the following effect:—Two labourers, James and Thomas Wilson, were engaged in cutting wood, when they were taken into custody by a gamekeeper and a policeman, and one of them charged before the magistrates at Ashford (Kent) Petty Sessions with "going round as if to see if there was anybody about, and then taking up a rabbit." According to the evidence of the witnesses, Thomas Wilson had no hand in the business, and was at work

when his brother James found the rabbit, which he does not hesitate to declare was placed there by the gamekeeper or the policeman, or by both. The Bench sentenced the two men to twenty-one days' imprisonment, with hard labour; and, whether he will cause inquiries to be made into the circumstances of the case, and will state whether policemen, who are paid by public money, can be legally employed to act as gamekeepers to private persons?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, who was indistinctly heard, stated that he had just got the facts of this case; but they did not correspond with those recited in the Question at all. First of all, these men were not taken into custody, but were summoned in the ordinary way; and, in the next place, they were not sentenced primarily to imprisonment. They were fined £1, and imprisonment in default, and they were given a month, at their own request, to find the money. Then, with reference to one of the persons, Thomas Wilson, the report made to him was that he was convicted once of larceny, four times of assault, three times for being drunk and disorderly, and once for malicious injury to property. Therefore he could not entirely accept his testimony when he "declared that the rabbit was placed there by the gamekeeper." These men were imprisoned for this offence in default of payment of the fine; and he thought that the length of time that they should be kept there in default of payment of the fine was a proper matter of consideration for the Home Secretary.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS asked the right hon. Gentleman to answer the Question that as regarded one of these men there was no evidence at all, the witnesses admitting that he was at work at the time the offence was committed; and would he also say whether the punishment was for past offences, or whether it was three weeks' hard labour for taking a rabbit, supposing the rabbit to have been taken?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he had already stated that the fine was imposed for an offence against the Game Act, and that in default of payment of the fine the punishment had to be inflicted, a month being given for the payment of the fine. With reference to the man whom the hon. Member asked about, he had given a record of his former convictions, and he was present on this occasion. Whether or not the evidence was sufficient to justify the assumption that, being present, he concurred in the act was a question he should like to consider.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS gave Notice that he would put a further Question to the right hon. Gentleman on the subject.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE SUB-POSTMASTER AT CRAANFORD.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that the Dublin Post Office authorities sent an official to Mr. E. Byrne, sub-postmaster of Craanford, to threaten him with dismissal if he did not prevent National League meetings being held in the same house as the post office; whether Mr. Byrne was obliged to sign an agreement that he would not allow such meetings to be held; and, whether such action upon the part of the Dublin authorities is approved?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I stated a few nights ago that the Postmaster of Craanford was not threatened with dismissal; but that he was informed that the Post Office authorities disapproved of political meetings being held in the same house as the post office. He was asked to sign a paper to the effect that he would not again allow the meetings to be held in the same house, and I am informed that he agreed to that course. I approve of the action of the Dublin authorities in the matter.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: With reference to this Question I am glad the right hon. Gentleman's answer to-day admits what he did not admit in his previous answer a few days ago. ["Order!"] I beg to give Notice, inasmuch as this Question has created considerable interest amongst the inhabitants of this district, that I will call attention to the fact that Mr. Byrne was not transgressing the rule which says that no political meetings shall be held in the same house as the post office. [*Cries of* "Order!"] I am giving Notice of a Question.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member, under cover of giving Notice of a Question, is now arguing.

MR. CALLAN: I beg to ask the Postmaster General—with reference to the last part of the Question of the hon.

Member for Wexford, to which he replied that he approved of the action of the Dublin authorities—who are the Dublin authorities whose action he approved of; and whether a secretary has been appointed to the Dublin Post Office, and, if not, when a secretary will be appointed?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Of course, the hon. Member will give Notice of the Question.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ST. PATRICK'S DAY—DEMONSTRATION AT LONDONDERRY.

MR. O'BRIEN: Before the Chief Secretary for Ireland leaves the House, perhaps he will be able to answer another Question. I beg to ask him whether he has any intention on the part of the Government to interfere with the National demonstration at Derry?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: When?

MR. O'BRIEN: On St. Patrick's Day.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The question I have been obliged to ask will show the hon. Member that I am unable to answer his Question.

MR. O'BRIEN: As it is of great importance that the intention of Her Majesty's Government should be known at once, I beg to give Notice that I will put this Question again before the rising of the House.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS—ENGLAND AND RUSSIA—THE DECLARATION OF PARIS.

MR. M'COAN asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will consider if the time has not come when the Military interests of this Country require that the Declaration of Paris should, like the provisions of the Treaty of 1856, which neutralized the Black Sea, be abrogated, and our full liberty of action as a Maritime Power be resumed?

MR. GLADSTONE: In answer to this Question, I have to state that Her Majesty's Government have not formed any intention of raising any question with respect to the Declaration of Paris. I think the Question of the hon. Member appears to proceed upon a certain growing misapprehension with regard to two subjects which cannot be said to be strictly akin. The provision for the neutralization of the Black Sea, as it is termed in the Question, had relation to a given state of things which prevailed at the moment; and it was well known amongst those who were immediately connected with the negotiation of the Treaty that it was not expected to be a permanent provision. [MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Oh, oh!] That is an interruption of a very extraordinary and unusual character. That, at least, is my opinion. At any rate, the principles involved in the Declaration of Paris, of course, were laid down with respect to the establishment of a permanent rule with regard to the commerce of the world.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether it was not a fact that the abrogation of the Treaty of Paris was extorted from England by a Foreign Power? [*Cries of* "Oh!"]

[No reply.]

CENTRAL ASIA—ENGLAND AND RUSSIA—THE DECLARATION OF PARIS.

MR. RICHARD asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, with reference to the Declaration adopted by the Plenipotentiaries who negotiated the Treaty of Paris in 1856, and which was embodied in Protocol 23 of that Treaty, viz.—

"The Plenipotentiaries do not hesitate to express, in the name of their Governments, the wish that States between which any serious misunderstanding may arise, should, before appealing to arms, have recourse, as far as circumstances might allow, to the good offices of a friendly Power;"

whether England and Russia were parties to that declaration, and whether that declaration does not afford just and sufficient ground for invoking the good offices of some friendly Power as regards the differences which now exist between England and Russia?

MR. GLADSTONE: The accuracy of the reference of my hon. Friend to the Declaration is beyond dispute. I shall proceed to answer the Question as clearly as I can, and I shall endeavour to do so in such a way as not to confuse the separate parts of the subject. With regard to the Afghan Frontier there have arisen two subjects of solicitude which are in themselves quite distinct from each other. One is as to the agreement made some time ago between Russia and England to ascertain the

Frontier by inquiry and correspondence; the other is as to the advances which have been made by Russian and Afghan Forces respectively to points within the debatable or debated ground. I mention these because they are entirely distinct from one another—one having relation to a question of right and the other to a question of fact, which evidently does not bear upon determining the question of right. As respects the second of these Questions—namely, the advance of the Forces—it has been agreed between Russia and England that no further advance should be made on either side. With regard to the first of these Questions—that to which my hon. Friend refers—my answer is that the subject of ascertaining the Frontier by inquiry and correspondence is at present under treatment by diplomatic communication, and that it has not yet reached such a stage — there has not been as yet such a full comparison of the views of the two sides respectively —and by the two sides I mean Russia on the one hand, and England and the Ameer of Afghanistan on the other—as to treat that matter as one which is exhausted. It would, therefore, be premature on my part at the present moment to pronounce any opinion as to a mode of solution which might or might not be proper under circumstances not yet fully ascertained.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am not quite sure whether the right hon. Gentleman was rightly understood to speak of an agreement as having been made to the effect that the Forces—that the persons on either side shall not advance beyond the positions which they now hold. I should like to know whether that is to be a permanent arrangement, or only a temporary one, to last while the boundary question is being discussed?

MR. GLADSTONE: My only reason for not saying that it was to last while the boundary was being discussed was that I did not wish to lead to any inference whatever being drawn in regard to those positions, or to what might be done with regard to them in the course of the negotiations. But the agreement of which I spoke is not in the nature of a formal instrument, but an agreement contained in diplomatic Correspondence. It is an agreement without any specific limit of time; but it will doubtless hold good so long as there is any occasion for it.

MR. CHAPLIN: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell the House when the agreement was arrived at, which he says is to last so long as there is occasion for it?

MR. ONSLOW: In connection with the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, I should like to ask whether the Government consider that the Afghans have advanced out of their own territory as yet; and whether this verbal agreement which the Prime Minister tells us has been come to has also been accepted by the Ameer of Afghanistan?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I should like to put a Question with regard to the very important statement which my right hon. Friend has made—whether the agreement which he mentioned is to be considered a new agreement, or whether it is one which has been supposed to be in force for some time past?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not quite certain what the right hon. Gentleman means by the "agreement which has been supposed to be in force for some time past." But, of course, the agreement is quite distinct from that which is known as the Clarendon-Gortchakoff Agreement, which embraces a much larger geographical range. I think this can be called properly a new Agreement, which has grown up in quite recent Correspondence, out of existing circumstances, and which has reference to the existing state of facts. I am afraid that I was not quite clear in my answer before. No doubt, this Agreement has reference to recent negotiations, and is intended to provide against a disturbance of these negotiations, and to leave a fair and open field for them. I cannot state the precise date of the agreement; but perhaps it is not very material. I certainly could not answer the Question put to me by the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) with regard to the positions taken up by the Afghans, because that would be pronouncing absolutely if I made a declaration upon matters with regard to which it is supposed that negotiations are to be carried on. Of course, I need only say that it is the duty of the Government to claim for the Afghans all the territory to which we think they are justly entitled.

MR. ONSLOW: Has the Ameer of Afghanistan agreed to this present, or new, verbal agreement made by the Government?

[No reply.]

MR. ONSLOW: I will put the Question to-morrow.

MR. ASHMEAD - BARTLETT: I propose on Monday to ask the right hon. Gentleman, who says that the Russian and Afghan Forces have advanced to debatable ground, whether he considers that the positions of Pul-i-Khatun, Zulficar, Akrobat, and Pul-i-Khisti, are debatable ground?

MR. GLADSTONE: My expression was "on debatable or debated ground," and not "on debatable" only.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Then I will add the words "or debated ground."

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SUPPLY.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked, Whether the Government would undertake not to bring on the Report of Supply at an hour when it would be impossible to discuss the various Resolutions? He made this request because most important Votes in Supply, including the Vote with respect to General Gordon and the Military and Naval operations in Egypt, had been taken that morning at an hour when they could not possibly be discussed.

MR. GLADSTONE replied, that, hemmed in as the Government were by the conditions of the law, they must be governed by the pleasure of the House in regard to the time when Supply and the Report thereon could be taken.

EGYPT (MILITARY OPERATIONS)—THE WAR IN THE SOUDAN — EXPENSES OF THE INDIAN CONTINGENT.

EXPLANATION.

MR. J. K. CROSS: My hon. Friend the Member for North Derbyshire (Mr. Cheetham) asked me on Monday night —the 9th—with respect to the division between the Indian and the British Exchequers of the charges of the Indian Contingent sent to Suakin, whether any assurances had been received that the employment of Indian troops in the Soudan on the proposed terms met with the approval of the Indian authorities? I replied that Her Majesty's Government had received no protests whatever, and that I thought that if any objections had been entertained in India, Her Majesty's Government would have heard of them. I should mention that on the 9th of February the Viceroy had been informed by telegram of the details of the Force required from India, and had been also informed, in the following words, of the proposed financial arrangement:—

"The British Treasury will defray all additional expense caused to the Indian Treasury by the employment of these troops."

When I answered my hon. Friend on Monday night no objection had been received from the Government of India to the financial arrangements proposed in the telegram which I have just quoted. But on the following morning—Tuesday, 10th of March—we received a despatch, dated February 17, in which the Government of India say that they—

"May have imperfectly apprehended the precise nature of the arrangement."

This despatch of February 17 seemed to imply that they were not perfectly satisfied; but, at the same time, in a Circular Order of the 12th of February, which was received by the same mail as the despatch of the 17th of February, they say that—

"The whole of the extra expenditure will, as in the Abyssinian Expedition, be debited to Her Majesty's Imperial Government."

A telegram was, therefore, sent on the 10th instant, explaining the arrangement, which strictly follows the Abyssinian precedent, and asking whether this does not meet their wishes. To this telegram the following reply has been received, which, with the permission of the House, I will read—

"Telegram from the Viceroy, dated Calcutta, March 11, 1885.

"Though your proposal does not altogether coincide with that contained in our financial despatch, No. 53, of February 17, we acquiesce in the arrangements suggested."

I have thought it better to make this statement, lest there should be the slightest misapprehension on the subject.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) (*re-committed* BILL.—[BILL 49.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 11th March.*]

[FOURTH NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

PART I.

REDISTRIBUTION.

Boroughs.

Clause 3 (Disfranchisement of certain boroughs for corruption).

MR. SLAGG moved, in page 2, line 3, to leave out the words "each of." The Committee would see that the object of the Amendment, taken in conjunction with an Amendment in the Schedule of which he had given Notice, was to retain the borough of Macclesfield in the list of boroughs returning one Member to Parliament. He was sure the Committee would acquit him, in discharging what he considered to be a duty, of having the slightest sympathy with the corrupt practices which had led to the disfranchisement of Macclesfield. On the contrary, he entertained the greatest possible antipathy to such practices, and his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General had no warmer admirer than himself (Mr. Slagg) for the efforts he had made, by legislation, to put an end in future to those illegal practices which had formerly prevailed at some elections. Nor was it his intention to rest his case in the slightest measure on a question of degrees of merit or demerit; but he would point out that there were several other towns which were reported by the Commissioners as having been guilty of precisely the same practices for which Macclesfield had incurred such a considerable penalty. His point was this—that, in starting afresh under the Bill, the Government might let bygones be bygones; and when they proposed to retain such cities as Chester, Gloucester, and Oxford, which had been convicted of precisely the same practices, they might extend the same spirit of forgiveness to the town of Macclesfield. He might point out that Oxford and Chester were remarkably happy in having friends at Court, and it would appear that the unfortunate town of Macclesfield had suffered because it was not similarly situated at the critical moment when the present Bill was drawn up. If she had possessed a friend at Court such a fate would never have befallen her. Although he did not for a moment pretend to say that the right hon. Gentlemen who had sat for those boroughs were in any way implicated in the corrupt practices of which the constituencies had been found guilty, yet he was sure that if Macclesfield had been so fortunate as to have had similar advocacy, it would not have been in its present position. But it had had no such friend, and, consequently, an exceptional fate had overtaken it. He made this claim not because Macclesfield was the best or the worst, as to corruption, but because, by the character of its population, the nature of its trade, and its growing importance, it had a right to a separate representation even more than Oxford, Gloucester, or Chester. The other boroughs he had just classed with Macclesfield, though of considerable importance, had not the large commercial importance possessed by Macclesfield. Now, in principle, he believed they had been accustomed in this country to base the representation, in a large degree, on commercial interests, and Macclesfield certainly occupied an important position commercially. As hon. Members knew, it was the ancient seat of the silk trade of the country; in fact, he might say that, at the present moment, it was the only great centre of the silk trade. In times past it had made large sacrifices in the public and general interests by being placed in competition with France under the Commercial Treaty of 1860. But with great industry and enterprize, with wonderful perseverance and resource, her manufacturers had set themselves to work to improve their position, and now it was the stronghold of the silk trade, and one of the most important manufacturing centres in the country. It possessed a technical school, grammar school, a high school, a free library, together with other valuable educational institutions, and the means it pos-

sessed for improving the condition of the people were highly efficient, and upon a very liberal scale. He, therefore, respectfully submitted to his right hon. Friend that all these matters should receive full weight before he determined to leave out this city from the list of fully represented towns, and extended his consideration to other and less important places. He regarded it as very hard that a thriving town of this sort was to be gibbetted for all coming generations in the way that was now proposed by the Government, and handed down to perpetual reprobation, owing to the fault of a certain number of voters in the past, who, in the natural course of events, would soon pass away. Since the schedule of voters was first made in the case of Macclesfield, he was told that no less than 1,500 were dead, or had disappeared from the locality. In the course of time all the rest would disappear. Surely the Government had no wish in this Bill to punish the town. They might be satisfied with expressing their virtuous indignation, and disfranchising the persons who had been guilty of corrupt and illegal practices. He considered that it was wrong to make Macclesfield for ever a martyr, and to place it under a stigma, because a certain number of voters had committed themselves in the past. Of course, he would be told that all these matters had been fixed and settled; but although the two Front Benches had agreed to exterminate Macclesfield, he could assure hon. Members that the people of Macclesfield had not so agreed, and they were exceedingly indignant, and very justly so, at the manner in which they had been disposed of under the Bill. This was not a Party question in the slightest degree, and he very earnestly begged hon. Members to understand that he did not urge this point on behalf of Macclesfield because it was likely to return a politician of either one complexion or the other. It was a very remarkable fact that the whole community on both sides of politics had come forward to press this proposition on the attention of the House and of the Government. He hoped that what he had said would induce his right hon. Friend to modify his virtuous indignation. He quite approved of the efforts of his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General in trying in every quarter to obliterate corrupt and illegal practices; but he thought that in selecting Macclesfield as a scapegoat, and making her a terrible example, the Government were going a little too far. Hon. Members, he felt assured, would agree with him that there was no reason whatever why Macclesfield should be singled out for exceptional treatment, when other boroughs which had been found guilty of precisely the same practices were allowed to go free—to say nothing of other boroughs which were as bad, or worse, but in which the corrupt practices had not been found out. He made a strong appeal to his right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) to be merciful while there was yet time, and to restore Macclesfield to the position her high general character, her great commercial importance, and the enterprize of her people certainly entitled her to. He begged to move the Amendment which appeared on the Paper in his name.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 3, to leave out the words "each of."—(*Mr. Slagg.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he thought the Committee fully appreciated the tone of his hon. Friend, and the very temperate manner in which his hon. Friend had placed his views before the Committee entitled those views to the fullest consideration. The hon. Member inferred that favour had been shown to other constituencies—the cities of Oxford and Chester—on account of the connection of two of his right hon. Friends with those cities; but the hon. Member would remember that his right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary was defeated at Oxford, was driven away from the representation, and was succeeded by a Conservative, and, therefore, it was not likely that he would have much affection for the city which had thus treated him. The case was almost similar at Chester, seeing that his right hon. Friend the late Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. Dodson), who formerly represented the city, had ceased to be its Member; and he could say most positively that in

the course taken both in regard to Oxford and Chester no such interest as had been suggested had been brought to bear upon the matter, nor had any such considerations been allowed to influence the Government as to the boroughs which were to be punished. Other considerations altogether had been brought to bear. His hon. Friend talked of "gibbetting" a constituency for all time; but Parliament had not shrunk in former times from disfranchising boroughs for similar offences. He would remind his hon. Friend of the cases of Sudbury, St. Alban's, Totnes, Bridgwater, Beverley, and Lancaster, in each of which the right to return Representatives had been extinguished on the ground of corrupt practices. What were the Government now doing in the case of Macclesfield? Macclesfield retained its representation, and that representation was quite adequate. Under this Bill one of the divisions of Cheshire was to be the Macclesfield division, and instead of allowing it to remain a borough with a population of 37,000, all they had done was to add Congleton to Macclesfied, and the only result was that the Macclesfield division would now have a population of 54,000 instead of 37,000. Therefore, instead of punishing Macclesfield as they had punished other boroughs for offences far less than those committed by Macclesfield, the representation of the town was not extinguished at all, but the town itself was allowed to remain the seat of a largely increased constituency by simply adding the town of Congleton to it. All the punishment awarded to it was to retain it on the list of county divisions returning a Member, with an addition to the area of representation. He would not trouble the Committee with all the details of the corrupt practices which were proved to exist in Macclesfield, and which led to its disfranchisement after the last General Election, nor would he enter into any speculation as to the degree of corruption that was necessary to justify the disfranchisement of a constituency. He would simply point out what was found by the Commissioners in the case of Macclesfield. In the first place, it was found that every election which had taken place in the town of Macclesfield, as far as the facts were known, since 1832, had been corrupt. He believed the statement had been circulated that there was one pure election. No doubt, the Commissioners went back into the history of the borough until they found a pure election, and they ascertained that there was a pure election in 1859, which stopped their retrospective inquiry; but it was pure, simply because it was uncontested. This was what the Commissioners reported in regard to the election of 1865—

"Corrupt practices did extensively prevail in Macclesfield."

and the Reports in reference to the General Elections of 1868, 1874, and 1880, were in precisely similar words. And as to the corruption itself, what was the Report of the Commissioners? 5,364 persons voted in 1880, and one of the witnesses who knew Macclesfield very well estimated that of that number more than 4,000 were corrupt. The Commissioners, who, of course, were unable to discover all the bribery that took place, actually did discover and schedule the names of 2,872 persons—out of the 5,364 who voted—as having either given or taken bribes. That represented 53 per cent, or more than one-half of those who voted, as having been absolutely bribed, and some of them, it appeared, were bribed on both sides. In addition, there were many minor cases of giving and receiving tickets which were in reality bribes given for the vote. With the exception of Sandwich, where 60 per cent of the persons who voted were reported to have been bribed, Macclesfield appeared to be the most corrupt constituency in England. Gloucester, no doubt, closely approached it, 45 per cent of the voters having been scheduled; and it must be remembered that in the first Bill introduced in reference to the corrupt boroughs, Gloucester was included. If, however, one offender had escaped, that could be no reason why another which richly deserved punishment should be passed over. He challenged his hon. Friend to find, in the case of Lancaster, Beverley, Bridgwater, or Totnes, which had ceased to return Members, any evidence of corruption worse than that of Macclesfield, which had been corrupt at every election. An hon. MEMBER: Sandwich.] No doubt, Sandwich was a very bad case, and Sandwich would be disfranchised; but if they looked at the extent of the corruption, and the length

of time over which it had been spread, there had been no case in England as bad as this. The corruption went on openly. It was not a matter of politics. Both the agents arranged it without the least secrecy. Five magistrates and 31 members of the Town Council had been scheduled, and several persons who were scheduled by the Commissioners had since been elected members of the Town Council. The bribery at Macclesfield was always so openly and extensively carried on that, as he had said, at one single election no less than five magistrates and 31 members of the Town Council were parties to it. Some of the witnesses complained that they only obtained 12*s*. a-day from one side, and 6*s*. from the other. The Commissioners said, in their Report—

"Your Commissioners were much struck by one feature of the corruption which prevailed at the last election—namely, the open, fearless, and confiding manner in which it was practised on both sides. No recourse was had to any of the ordinary contrivances by which elsewhere such practices are attempted to be hidden; the 'man in the moon,' and his methods of procedure, were alike unknown at Macclesfield. Not the slightest anxiety appears to have been evinced or precaution taken by either party to conceal its doings from the other, and the number of subordinate agents employed for the purpose of bribing was of surprising and quite exceptional magnitude, and everybody was deemed adequate to the work; neither position, age, character, nor discretion being held requisite. The fortunes of the candidates were without hesitation or misgiving, and without any guarantee of political fidelity, placed in the hands of hundreds of the poorest and most ignorant classes—in the hands of girls, and even of children; whilst the devolution of authority was clearly traceable from the highest official to the lowest subordinate, so that no difficulty could be experienced in fixing the candidate with liability for the acts of his many hundred agents."

Such unblushing corruption could not be overlooked by the House; and he did hope that the Committee, while wishing to forget the past, would not shrink from inflicting fair and just punishment. They must also bear in mind that if they accepted this Amendment they would have to look about and see where a Member was to be found for Macclesfield; and it would be a strong course to adopt to take a Member from a town which by this Bill was entitled to representation and give it to such a town as Macclesfield.

MR. STAVELEY HILL said, he did not agree with the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) that it would be desirable to restore the Member for Macclesfield. But as this was the first of the clauses where the question of continuing the disfranchisement of these boroughs arose, it would be interesting to give the history of the Commissions that had been held. In giving that history he would be as brief as possible; but he wished to show the Committee to what extent the Bill dealt with the disfranchised and scheduled voters.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that this clause did not deal with the scheduled voters, and upon that point he should have a proposal to make to the Committee.

MR. STAVELEY HILL said, that under those circumstances he would not proceed further with the case of scheduled voters; but he ventured to remind the Committee very briefly of the way in which the question stood. In 1866 Commissions were sent down to Lancaster, Totnes, Reigate, and Great Yarmouth. He was himself one of the Commissioners at Lancaster, and he was able to say that the corruption there was scarcely less extensive than it was subsequently proved to have been in Macclesfield. In 1867 the boroughs of Lancaster, Totnes, Reigate, and Great Yarmouth were all disfranchised The next step taken was to send down Commissioners to Beverley, Bridgwater, Cashel, and Sligo in 1870. Disfranchisement followed in the case of those four boroughs; and not only were the boroughs disfranchised, but certain persons were personally scheduled. In 1875 the same course was adopted of sending down Commissions to Boston and Norwich. The Writ for Norwich was suspended until the end of the Parliament, and Boston was disfranchised for seven years; so that those two boroughs had a less amount of punishment inflicted upon them than either of the other boroughs he had mentioned. In 1880 Commissions were sent down to Boston, Canterbury, Chester, Gloucester, Macclesfield, Oxford, and Sandwich; and in 1881 those places were so far disfranchised that the issue of new Writs was suspended until after the meeting of Parliament in 1882. By a Bill introduced in 1882 that suspension was renewed until 1883; in 1883 it

was carried forward until 1884; and last year it was continued down to the present time. But the present Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill proposed to give a seat to each of those boroughs with the exception of Macclesfield. [An hon. MEMBER: And Sandwich.] As the population of Sandwich was below the number necessary to return a Member, there was nothing to be said in regard to it. Clause 27 of the Bill, which dealt with the voters who had been scheduled by the Bribery Commissioners, continued the disfranchisement of those voters, and also applied to them Section 39 of the Parliamentary Elections Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act of 1883. The question raised by the Amendment had reference only to the borough of Macclesfield, and he agreed with what had fallen from the Attorney General that Macclesfield was no worse off now than it would be if the proposal of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) were adopted. It was proposed to add to Macclesfield another town with a cognate industry—namely, Congleton, and a few adjoining parishes, and practically Macclesfield, with Congleton, would have its Member again. He had intended to avail himself of this opportunity for saying a word with regard to the disfranchised voters; but he acceded to the suggestion of the Attorney General that there was a distinction to be drawn tween the voters and the boroughs. He had, however, an Amendment on this very clause with regard to Macclesfield, and he would explain what the course was which he ventured to suggest, in the hope that his hon. and learned Friend might adopt it. He agreed with the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) that it was not desirable to continue this gibbetting by name of the corrupt boroughs and voters. As they had already passed a new Franchise Act, and a new Act dealing with corrupt practices, and were to have a redistribution of seats, he thought, if they could, it would be as well to wipe out all previous legislation on this point. His proposal was to leave out Clause 3, and as the effect of this would be to leave Macclesfield and Sandwich as boroughs, he would suggest that they should place those boroughs, without saying why or wherefore, in the list of boroughs no longer to return a Member. They would then be in the Schedule with Beverley, Bridgwater, Sligo, and Cashel, and the whole of them would cease to be any longer entitled to return a Member. He ventured to suggest that course to the Attorney General as a medium course which they might follow. He thought that plan would be far better than to gibbet Macclesfield and Sandwich with the stigma of having been disfranchised for corrupt practices.

MR. RYLANDS said, he did not at all agree with the suggestion of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for West Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), although he entirely concurred with him that when they reached the 27th clause it would be desirable to consider the propriety of continuing the disfranchisement of voters by name who had already been scheduled by past Commissions. He supported Her Majesty's Government in the course they proposed to take in regard to Macclesfield. He thought that Macclesfield had been very fairly dealt with. So far from being extinguished, the town would remain an important centre of representation in association with another important town, and it would form a very important section of the county of Chester. Under these circumstances, he did not think the people of Macclesfield had any right to complain, because, although they were not included as a borough, they would still return a Member and continue to have separate representation. He did not think that the town of Macclesfield was entitled to make any further demand, and, therefore, if his hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) divided the Committee, he should certainly vote with the Government against the proposition of his hon. Friend.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT asked if the corrupt voters of Macclesfield, about whom so much virtuous indignation had been expressed, were to be whitewashed in order that they might form part of the voters of the new Macclesfield electoral division? He understood that Macclesfield was to receive, on losing its power of separate representation, the advantage of being created an electoral division in conjunction with another town. He wished to know whether the voters already disfranchised were to be restored to the regular list?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES), said, that would depend

entirely upon the course the Committee would be prepared to take when they came to the consideration of a future clause.

MR. AGNEW supported the Amendment of his hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg). He thought that in this matter Macclesfield was being made a scapegoat. He saw no material difference in the case of Macclesfield and the state of things which was found to exist at the last Election at Oxford, Chester, Gloucester, and other towns. He was of opinion that Macclesfield had been sufficiently punished already. The Committee ought to know that the ratepayers of Macclesfield had been called upon to pay a sum of £5,000 or £6,000 as the cost of the election inquiry. They had also suffered a grievous disability in being unrepresented in the present Parliament. At the last Census the town of Macclesfield had a population of 37,000, and the trading population of so large a town was, he thought, fairly entitled at least, having regard to the circumstances of the case, to be represented by one Member. The Committee was doubtless aware that since 1832, up to the present time, Macclesfield had been entitled to return two Members, and it was not too much to ask that the large working-class population of so important a town should not be altogether disfranchised. He had not a word to say in extenuation of the evil deeds that might have attended the General Election; but he thought that it was a serious thing to disfranchise the population of such an important constituency — the centre, as his hon. Friend had pointed out, of a great and growing industry. It was an industry that was rapidly reviving. In the last decade the population of Macclesfield had increased by 2,000, while the rateable value of property in the town had increased to the extent of £16,000 or £17,000. Certainly, then, it was a hardship that a stigma should be imposed by this Bill upon a town, which, if at one time peccant, was now repentant. He knew from experience that Macclesfield had borne the disgrace which followed the election inquiry with great humility. His hon. Friend had referred to the fact that at least 1,500 of the scheduled voters were now non-resident at Macclesfield. Their places had been taken by others, and he had not understood the hon. and learned Attorney General to say that the whole constituency was corrupt. Surely a leaven of righteouness was left in it; and he would appeal to the Members for Cheshire, most of whom sat on the Benches opposite, to support his hon. Friend, if he carried his Amendment to a division. He was afraid that the disfranchisement of Macclesfield, as a Parliamentary borough, which would be the effect of the Bill, would go far to crush out the public life of the town. He very much disputed the assertion of the hon. and learned Member for West Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill) that Macclesfield would be better off in consequence of being joined to Congleton—a town 10 or 12 miles distant. At any rate, the people of Macclesfield did not think so, nor did they regard it as other than a poor *solatium* for disfranchisement that the name of Macclesfield was to be given to the new Parliamentary division of Cheshire. If his hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) went to a division, he would certainly support him.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that his hon. Friend who had just addressed the Committee had urged, in favour of Macclesfield, that it was not worse than certain other boroughs; but surely that was rather a reason for including those other boroughs, than for excluding Macclesfield? The case against Macclesfield was a strong one, and ought only to be considered upon its own merits. It must be borne in mind that the representation of Macclesfield would not be got rid of altogether, but that hereafter it would, in conjunction with Congleton and an extended district, return one Member. That was a remedy which had already been applied in other cases —such as East Retford and Chippenham—where the districts had been enlarged, and the representation made to include other places; and he thought the result of Macclesfield ceasing to have a separate representation would be calculated rather to improve, than to injure, the public life of a town where no less than five magistrates and 31 members of the Town Council had been scheduled for bribery. It would become the centre of an industrial community, and would not be merged in an agricultural district. The new district proposed to be created was mainly an urban district,

and Congleton would have reason to complain of being thrown into a rural district if the separate representation of Macclesfield were preserved. If they were to destroy the new county district of Macclesfield, and give to Macclesfield one of its two Members, they would then have to deprive Congleton and other manufacturing places of a representation which it would be very difficult indeed to provide by any other means. In any re-arrangement of the county representation, the difficulty, he thought, would be insuperable; and, in fact, it would become necessary to alter three divisions of the county of Chester if the Amendment were passed. In addition to which Congleton would be thrown into an agricultural district, and most likely the agricultural interests would be swamped by the addition. There was no county which had given the Commissioners more trouble than Cheshire, and he thought it had been very satisfactorily dealt with. It would be a great pity to throw into confusion the whole of the arrangements of the county, as the Amendment would do. If Macclesfield was retained as a borough, all the arrangements of the Boundary Commissioners would be upset; and he certainly did not think that his hon. Friend the Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) had made out a case for such a change.

MR. WARTON said, he thought this proposal of the Government placed their conduct in a very peculiar light. It seemed to him that the whole proceedings of the Government, with respect to disfranchisement for corrupt practices, had been characterized by reckless inconsistency. Some time ago the Government proposed to disfranchise three boroughs—Sandwich, Macclesfield, and Gloucester; and it was a singular fact that the Government should have included Gloucester at one time, and excluded it from disfranchisement at another. He thought it would be necessary to ascertain the reason why Gloucester was to be spared. The Attorney General told them, or rather had inferred, that one way of arriving at the guilt of a borough was to take the percentage of voters who had been bribed. The hon. and learned Gentleman told them that 60 per cent of the voters of Sandwich, and 63 per cent of those of Macclesfield, had been scheduled for bribery; and it was further stated that the percentage in Gloucester amounted to 50 per cent. These figures, however, were open to doubt, because they ought, to a certain extent, to look at the nature and degree of the bribery; and if they did so, he was inclined to think that a very large proportion of the bribery at Macclesfield was not of a very heavy character. It was a sort of one shilling and half-a-crown bribery, although, no doubt, it was carried on upon an extensive scale. It was not, however, to be compared with the enormous sums paid in bribes in the borough of Bridgwater. He had no desire to defend Macclesfield, but he was only anxious to show how little faith they could have in the consistency of the Government when they bore in mind their changed ideas in regard to the question whether Gloucester should be disfranchised or not. He did not for a moment say that Gloucester ought to have been disfranchised. He was glad that it was spared, if only for the sake of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Monk), who was such a constant attendant upon the deliberations of the House. He could not agree with the hon. Member for South-East Lancashire (Mr. Agnew) that any repentance on the part of Macclesfield was to be taken into consideration. The hon. Member confounded repentance with remorse. He recollected the case of a very distinguished man, who was found guilty of having received a bribe, and who went out at once and hanged himself. That was a very different kind of repentence from that displayed by Macclesfield, who, when she was found guilty of bribery, never dreamt of committing suicide.

MR. W. H. JAMES said, that if they were to judge from the Election Commissions of 1880 and 1881, the measures which the House had adopted against bribery in the case of Totnes, Beverley, Bridgwater, and Great Yarmouth had not been altogether successful. It was perfectly certain that they would never do anything against bribery by punishing the small people, such as the poor voters and humble solicitors. What they wanted to get at was those who supplied the money. Until they did that, the existence of corrupt practices would not be got rid of.

MR. LEWIS said, it was well to deal with relative cases of bribery and

corruption as an element of the extent of punishment to be meted out. The hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) had referred to the cases of Oxford and Chester, and he (Mr. Lewis) thought it was desirable to remind the Committee of the extraordinary circumstances which attended those cases, and which certainly told against any exceptional treatment of Macclesfield. They were told, in the Report of the Macclesfield Commissioners, that the total amount of expenditure was some £5,000 or £6,000; but what was the case with regard to Oxford? He left out all consideration whatever of the bribery that was proved to have taken place at the General Election, and he would only deal with that which occurred at the bye-election in the month of May on the acceptance of Office by the Home Secretary. In that case, in an election which lasted only a week, the expenses amounted to no less than £9,000. At Macclesfield the occasion was the General Election, and the cost was £5,000 or £6,000 for a contest which extended for a month or five weeks, whereas at Oxford an election, which was spread over eight days at the outside, cost £9,000. The constituency of Oxford was within 100 or 200 of that of Macclesfield, being about 5,000 or 6,000 in each case. And what was the case with regard to Chester? In that contest he also found that £9,000 were reported to have been spent. It did appear to him then that, under such circumstances, it was somewhat inconsistent to complain of the town of Macclesfield, and to compel her to become part of a new county division, and to permit Oxford and Chester to retain their representation. As to the stigma cast upon a town by the names of persons being scheduled in an Act of Parliament, that course was not taken because the town was exceptionally guilty, but because the inquiry of a Commission showed that a large portion of the constituency had been bribed. He did not think it was necessary for the Attorney General to repel the suggestion of outside influence in the cases of Oxford and Chester; but when the hon. and learned Gentleman said that the Home Secretary had no reason for giving his benediction to the City of Oxford, seeing that he had been defeated, that was just what he did. After the right hon. and learned Gentleman had been defeated, he addressed the people from one of the hotel windows, and blessed them in the most unutterable way that a great orator, such as the right hon. and learned Gentleman, was quite able to do. This may have been the way in which his benediction and blessing had been carried out. Certainly, no preponderating case had been made out to justify the House in attaching a stigma to Macclesfield. The Attorney General had referred to the cases of Totnes, Bridgwater, and Beverley, and had spoken of those towns as having been treated with severity; but in Totnes and Bridgwater the bribery was not limited to 2*s.* 6*d.*, but almost every trader in the town received as much as £10 or £20 for his vote at the election. To compare such places with Macclesfield, where a voter got a ticket which was the remnant of an old system of corruption, and where the expenditure only reached £6,000, was really absurd. It seemed to him that the Committee were placed in an exceptional difficulty in this case. If it had been merely a question of representation, he did not think that Macclesfield would have much to complain of. He recollected, however, the eagerness displayed in some parts of the House to put a whitewashing clause into the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill, which passed a year or two ago, and he recollected that such clause was put in to prevent an inquiry being made into any case that had occurred in times past. He thought, therefore, that that clause ought to operate by analogy in the case of Macclesfield. It was not necessary to say anything of the case of Sandwich, where the bribery was of a very different character from that committed in Macclesfield. He thought the balance of convenience and propriety would be to make an exception in this case; and if the Motion went to a division, he should vote in favour of the excision of Macclesfield from the Schedule. He should do so simply on the ground that it was rather a hard thing that the first time that a Petition had been prosecuted against Macclesfield, and having regard to the other offenders let off, that an odious exception should be made against her.

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS remarked, that if it had not been for an observation

that fell from the last speaker, he would not have troubled the Committee; but reference had been made to the amount of money spent at the Macclesfield Election and the cost of the Oxford Election. It was pretty well known by those who had inquired into the details of the case in connection with the Oxford Bribery Commission, that comparatively little money went into the hands of the electors. The Commissioners sat for a long time, and took evidence in the slovenly way in which such Commissioners generally did take evidence, giving every facility for the larger culprits to escape. The principal culprits were attorneys, and not the voters themselves; and one particular attorney in that town, who had received large sums of money in order to save himself, inveigled other persons into the net and succeeded in escaping. That individual came forward before the Commissioners and confessed to having received large sums of money about which he gave no account beyond the fact that he had burnt his papers. He got off as attorneys generally managed to get off, and he still remained a Clerk of the Peace for the Division, although he certainly ought to have been disqualified from holding public appointments ever afterwards.

MR. RAIKES said, he thought that the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) had not chosen the most convenient way of bringing forward his Amendment. It would have been better to have dealt with the case of Macclesfield by itself when they came to the Schedules. He would ask the hon. Member not to press his Amendment on this occasion, but rather to take the opportunity, when they came to the Schedules, of seeing whether they could not deal with this particular borough. Macclesfield, in any case, would not have much to complain of, because in the position it was to occupy in the future it would be able to give full play to its elective force. By the addition of Congleton, the whole of the particular industry in which Macclesfield was engaged would be included in the representation. At the same time, he thought that more had been made of the electoral offences of Macclesfield than was necessary. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General told them that the bulk of the constituencies had been scheduled for corrupt practices. No doubt, that was so; but he agreed with the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) that the quality of the corruption, although the quantity was very considerable, had not been by any means of such a flagrant character as that which marked the delinquencies of other boroughs which had been the subject of inquiry by a Royal Commission. Therefore, there was a certain amount of unfairness apparent in treating small bribes, which were almost regarded by the voters as a slight honorarium for going to the poll, in the same way as the payment of bribes of £5 and upwards for voting in a particular way was punished. Macclesfield was rather harshly treated in being exposed to stigma in this peculiar way; and he should be disposed, when they came to the Schedules, to move the substitution of the name of Boston for that of Macclesfield. Boston was, in his humble opinion, far more deserving of stigma than Macclesfield; and he thought, when the proper time came, he should be able to make out a good case for putting Boston in the Schedule, and leaving Macclesfield out of it. He would, therefore, ask the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) not to press the Amendment on the present occasion, but to leave it open, so that the question might be raised on the Schedules, and dealt with in a more convenient and satisfactory manner.

MR. SLAGG said, he very much regretted that his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General had taken the line of instituting comparisons; for they were aware that comparisons were odious in nearly all cases, and he thought they were particularly so in this instance. The line of argument taken by the hon. and learned Gentleman was one he had very carefully avoided, as he had not sought to go into the general question of the relative corruption of different boroughs in which improper practices had been reported by the Commissioners as having extensively prevailed. Had he done so, he fully believed he could have made out quite as bad a case in some of the other boroughs as that of Macclesfield. But he could not leave this part of the question without pointing out that the bribery which had taken place in the borough of Oxford was enormous, and far trans-

cending anything that had occurred at Macclesfield; and that all the hon. and learned Gentleman had gained by making the comparisons he had instituted was that he had shown that, whereas bribery was very extensive in some other boroughs, as far as the sums paid were concerned, in Macclesfield pretty nearly all that could be said as to the quality of the bribery was that it was open and above-board. He was very sorry his hon. and learned Friend would not accept his Amendment; but as he had taken that course, it seemed hopeless to press it upon the Committee. He should, therefore, ask leave to withdraw the Amendment, in order to raise it afterwards in another form.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. WARTON moved to omit, in page 2, line 4, after the word "cease," the words "to be entitled." The clause now under consideration provided that the boroughs to which it referred should cease to be entitled to return any Member. He could not see what was the use of the words "to be entitled." It was quite enough to say "should cease to return any Member." He contended that the words he proposed to omit were mere surplusage, and ought to be struck out.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that at the present moment Macclesfield did not return any Members; but, at the same time, it was entitled to do so.

MR. WARTON said, Macclesfield did at the present moment, in a certain sense, return Members; but the Government had chosen, year after year, to suspend the issue of the Writs, and, therefore, in the sense in which he put it, Macclesfield might be said to return Members at the present time. Macclesfield was in the list of boroughs which returned Members to that House, and it was quite possible for any Member to move that Writs should be sent to Macclesfield by the Clerk of the Crown requiring the borough to proceed to an election. It so happened that by an Act of Parliament, passed last year, the Speaker was required not to issue his Writs during the Vacation; but the time had expired at the meeting of the present Parliament, and the position in which Macclesfield now stood was that it had all its former right to return two Members—a right which it had acquired when Parliament re-assembled on the 19th of last month. Under these circumstances, he felt he ought to press his Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 4, after the word "cease," to leave out the words "to be entitled."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Amendment *negatived.*

MR. GILES moved to leave out the clause. He said his object in moving this Amendment was that a Member should be given to Macclesfield. He was afraid that the discussion that had taken place on the previous Amendment had very much taken the wind out of his sails; but, in asking the Committee to accept his Amendment, he contended that its adoption would not affect the general principle of the Bill. The only way in which the Bill would be affected by it would be that in future Macclesfield would be entitled to return one Member; and he could not see that any difficulty would be created if the Amendment were adopted. Macclesfield was a very important town, and the centre of a large industry, and it was proposed by this clause that it should be treated in a very harsh manner. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had stated that Macclesfield would be rather benefited than otherwise by the arrangement in the Bill; and he (Mr. Giles) would say that if that were the case, the stigma now attached to the town should be taken away, and the borough at once removed from the operation of the intended Penal Clause. He submitted that the principle embodied in this clause was a new departure from everything they had had before, and when they talked of corrupt practices, and of Macclesfield being worse than any other borough, he should like to ask hon. Members whether they were not perfectly well aware that in old times there were certain parties in almost every borough who looked to a General Election as a periodical harvest? They had votes which they wanted to sell, and somebody else had money and wanted to buy. All that, however, was at an end;

and when they talked of punishing the borough of Macclesfield they should remember that if they were to punish the 53 per cent of voters, who, as the right hon. Gentleman had said, were corrupt, they would also be punishing 47 per cent of innocent persons. He did not think that that was a fair principle to proceed upon. He held that it was no argument to say Macclesfield should be deprived of its representation because of its being once corrupt. The question was, would the Bill admit of Macclesfield having a Member? If it did, he contended that they should give it a representation, and let it start with a clean sheet. Let them condone the past, and say, "Let bygones be bygones," because in the future the community would be sufficiently protected by the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act against corruption at General Elections. If hon. Members looked at Clauses 4, 5, 6, 10 and 21 of the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, they would see that the punishment for transgressions of the law were something frightful, varying from penalties of £100 to £200, from disqualification for seven years to disqualification for ever, and imprisonment of from one to two years, with hard labour. That, he thought, would be considered quite sufficient punishment for indulgence in corrupt practices; but there was one clause in the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act—Clause 49—which, he thought, went a long way to show that Clause 3 of the present Bill ought not to be there. Clause 49 of that Act said—

"Notwithstanding the provisions of the Act 15 & 16 Vict. c. 57, or any amendment thereof, in any case where, after the passing of this Act, any Commissioners have been appointed, in a joint Address of both Houses of Parliament, for the purpose of making inquiry into the existence of corrupt practices in any election, the said Commissioners shall not make inquiries concerning any election that shall have taken place prior to the passing of this Act, and no witness called before such Commissioners or at any election petition after the passing of this Act shall be asked or bound to answer any question for the purpose of proving the commission of any corrupt practice at or in relation to any election prior to the passing of this Act."

The Prime Minister had said the other night, in the discussion which took place on the question of University Representation, that this Bill might fairly be said to exclude everything of the nature of disfranchisement. He should like to call the attention of the Attorney General to that statement, for, after quoting this opinion on the part of the Prime Minister, he submitted that he had proved his case. He hoped, therefore, the Committee would agree to accept his Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the Clause.—(*Mr. Giles.*)

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the clause had no disfranchising effect whatever, and no man would lose his vote by it.

MR. GILES said, Part III. of Schedule 1, referred to in the clause, had a disfranchising effect.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, a certain number of persons gained by the clause, but no one lost his vote by it. It was not like the case of disfranchising a borough, where the electors lost their votes. Now, the people residing in the borough would go into the county and retain the same vote they had had before.

MR. GILES desired to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the latter part of the clause, which said—

"After the passing of this Act each of the Parliamentary boroughs named in the third part of the First Schedule to this Act shall cease to be entitled to return any Member."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that was so; but there was no disfranchisement of the people implied. They would all keep their votes; but, instead of voting for the borough of Macclesfield, they would vote for the Macclesfield division of the county of Chester. With regard to what had been said about Sandwich, the population there was only 2,800—it was a mere village. The population of Deal and Walmer was larger. The question of the population of Macclesfield had been fully discussed, and he need not go further into it.

MR. STAVELEY HILL suggested that it would be as well to wipe out the 3rd clause of the Bill and the 3rd part of the First Schedule, and insert the two words "Macclesfield" and "Sandwich" in the 1st part of the First Schedule.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, he found the words "as boroughs" in the 2nd clause, while in the 3rd clause

they were left out. He would suggest whether, as they were thought necessary in Clause 2, they were not also necessary in Clause 3? He thought that the safest course was to retain the words in Clause 2, and to insert them in Clause 3, as that would not only make the two enactments consistent, but would also prevent any doubt as to the meaning.

MR. TOMLINSON pointed out that the number of inhabitants was not specified in the first part of the 1st Schedule as the reason for the disfranchisement of the boroughs named in it. He therefore thought it was unjust and invidious to single out two towns for penal disfranchisement, when they were really not worse than others which had smaller populations, and might have been included with the small boroughs in the first part of the Schedule.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he could not understand why the words "as boroughs" should be inserted in the previous clause.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he thought the hon. Member behind him (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) was, perhaps, right in the suggestion he had made, that the words "as boroughs" were not necessary.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, if his hon. Friend (Mr. Giles) pressed his Amendment to a division, he should vote for it. He thought it would be most unfair to single out these two boroughs for exceptional punishment, when there were many others that were in a far worse position. They had been told that the voters of Macclesfield would not lose their votes, but that when the town ceased to be a Parliamentary borough the electors would be merged among the county voters in the Macclesfield division, and have the same rights as they now possessed; but he would ask why, if the Macclesfield voters were as corrupt as they were said to be, they should be restored to their position as electors in a county division? No doubt, there were certain parties who would be very glad to see the 30,000 or 40,000 inhabited-householders of Macclesfield merged in the county of Chester; but he thought the clause a very unfair one. In fact, the more he looked at the details and particulars of this Bill, the more he thought those on his side of the House had reason to complain of it. On a matter of this kind he cared very little about one Party or the other; but he did think that an important measure like this, which was intended to alter the entire representation of the country, ought to be fair and just, and that the infliction of the stigma and disgrace on the two particular boroughs that had been singled out from among a number of others that were admittedly quite as corrupt reflected no credit whatever on the framers of the Bill. He should certainly vote for the Amendment if a division were taken upon it.

MR. BIGGAR said, he hoped the Government would stick to the clause. The two boroughs of Macclesfield and Sandwich were, perhaps, no worse than many others, but they had been found out and must pay the penalty. For his own part, he thought it quite right that the House of Commons should mark its sense of the misconduct of those boroughs in the manner proposed. As had already been stated, the electors belonging to the two boroughs would not thereby lose their *status* as voters, because they would become absorbed in the county divisions in which the boroughs were situated. If the clause were agreed to, the effect would, he thought, be that each of the boroughs affected by it would be very much in the same position as a vicious horse that was put along with three steady animals in a four-horse coach—it would be forced to go straight, whether it liked it or not—for there would not be so much inducement to go wrong when the two boroughs were merged in large constituencies as there had been before. He therefore thought it most desirable that the Committee should pass the clause. In his opinion, if even-handed justice were meted out to those boroughs, the electors would even be allowed the opportunity of voting for the county divisions into which they would be taken; but, regarding the proposal of the Government in the light of a compromise, he thought they were very liberally dealt with, and that they had no reason to raise any complaint against the clause.

MR. WARTON said, he was inclined to agree with the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) in regard to the point he had raised, and to think that, instead of inserting the words "as boroughs" in Clause 3, it would be better to strike them out of

Clause 2 on the Report. He also agreed with the hon. and learned Member below him (Mr. Staveley Hill), that it would be far less invidious to put the names of the two boroughs under discussion into the 1st Schedule, because, although they all had their minds full of figures on this subject, there was no occasion to make any particular reference to them, and no reason why they should state in the Schedule why this or that borough ceased to return Members. It might be because a borough had too small a population, or it might be because it had sinned; but, whatever the ground, there was no reason why it should be stated in the Schedule. He hoped those who agreed with his hon. Friend (Mr. Giles) would give him their support.

MR. H. TOLLEMACHE said, he hoped the Government would accept the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member for West Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), and insert Macclesfield and Sandwich in the first part of the 1st Schedule. If they simply voted to leave out the 3rd clause, there would be this great difficulty, that the large populations outside the limits of the Parliamentary boroughs of Macclesfield and Sandwich would have to be absorbed in the neighbouring constituencies, and in the case of Macclesfield the number that would have to be thus provided for would be about 18,000. In the case of Sandwich the number of people thus absorbed would be no less than about 38,000. He should not feel justified in voting for the omission of the 3rd clause, unless the Committee had a statement from the Attorney General or some other Member of the Government, to the effect that they were willing to allow the two boroughs, Macclesfield and Sandwich, to appear in the first portion of the 1st Schedule.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 153; Noes 31: Majority 122.—(Div. List, No. 52.)

Clause 4 (Boroughs to have numbers of Members reduced).

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, he wished to move an Amendment, in page 2, line 6, to leave out the words "the City of London shall return two Members and no more, and." He would ask the indulgence of the Committee in moving this Amendment, for he felt how unworthy he was to fill a seat which in former days had been filled by most distinguished men—he felt how unworthy he was on the present occasion to discharge the painful duty of pleading for the Parliamentary life of that great constituency which had done him the honour of sending him to that House. It was proposed by the present scheme to do away with the privilege which the City of London had enjoyed for more than 550 years. He wished to put before the Committee reasons why he thought no case could be made out for doing away with the great privilege which this, the first City in the Empire, really the first City in the world, had so long enjoyed. He knew that the argument which the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would use would be the population of the City; but he (Mr. Fowler) wished to represent to the Committee that the number of electors was a much more important point in connection with a constituency than the number of people who slept within its limits. With regard to the City of London the registered number of electors was 26,636, of whom nearly 20,000 were ratepayers, and about 7,000 Liverymen. No doubt, they would hear complaints made against the right of the Liverymen to vote; but he would remind the Committee that the Livery of the City of London included many of the greatest men in this country. He saw opposite to him his hon. Colleague, and his hon. Friend the Member for Tewkesbury (Mr. R. Biddulph Martin), who were his opponents at the last Election, and who had been supported by a great many distinguished men on the other side of the House. The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. Gladstone) was, he believed, engaged in Mid Lothian at the time, but that right hon. Gentleman declared in favour of his hon. Friends, and, if he were not mistaken, three Members of the present Government had voted for the hon. Gentlemen. Probably, the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill (Sir Charles W. Dilke) also voted for them. He (Mr. Fowler) and his Colleagues at that Election had been supported by three Members of the then existing Cabinet. Therefore, he might say that the Livery of the City of London comprised among

its number many of the first men in the country—many men whose names were held in honour throughout the whole civilized world. Well, he proposed to compare the way in which the City of London was dealt with under this Bill with the manner in which other towns were treated. Newcastle was the largest of the two-Member constituencies, and it had 14,000 electors, while others had a much less number. Bath, for instance, had only 6,000, Devonport 4,500, Northampton 8,700. Then, let them look at the boroughs which it was proposed should return three Members; they would find among these Nottingham, with an electorate of 19,300, and Bristol, which, with its electorate of 26,700, was to return four Members. The result was, that while it was proposed in this Bill to give four Members to 26,700 electors in Bristol, it was proposed to take away two Members from the 26,636 of the City of London. He wished to ask whether a difference of only 364 voters, or they might say 500, was a sufficient reason for taking away two Members from the greatest commercial City in the world and giving two Members to a place of much less importance—namely, Bristol? He wished to speak with every admiration for the great City of Bristol, which, they all knew, was one of the foremost cities of the world, yet they must be also aware that it did not by any means hold the position which was held by the City of London. Nevertheless, in this Bill it was proposed to take away two Members from London and to confer two on Bristol, the difference between the two places being simply that Bristol contained 364, or they might say 500, more electors. Even if they deducted the Livery vote, it would be seen that the City of London was in a very superior position to many cities and boroughs which would have three Members. As he had said, he was perfectly aware the argument would be that the Bill was based upon population. The Bill was supposed to be based on that, and it would be stated that by the last Census the population of the City of London was only 50,526. But he maintained that that Census most inadequately represented the position which the City of London held. In the first place, he would take some exception to the circumstances under which the Census was taken. It was effected for what, no doubt, was a very good reason—namely, the general convenience of the public, and it was very probable that Sunday night was the best time at which to take a Census for the country at large; but still, as regarded the City of London, a Census taken at such a time must bear very unfavourably upon it, and could not be looked upon as very reliable. He had no doubt that if, for instance, the Census had been taken on a Monday night—at which time he himself resided in the City, and would have counted as a unit in the population—the population would have been found to be much greater. In his own case he had been returned under the Census as an inhabitant of Wiltshire, and there were very many people in a similar position. The fact was that owing to the accident that the Census was taken on a Sunday night, the population of London was made to appear much smaller than it really was. His argument was that a night population was a most inadequate test of the numbers that the City of London contained. Would Her Majesty's Government, supposing they wished to ascertain the number of Members in the House, consent to having a poll taken during the day? Certainly not, as the Business of the House was carried on at night. In the same way it was absurd to take a Census of the City of London in the night time, when its business was carried on during the day. The result of the day Census in London, 261,000 odd, did not include the casual, fleeting population such as cabmen, carmen, and police, though, of course, it did include those people who spent all day in the City and only left it to sleep. He wished to urge upon the Committee, in the strongest manner possible, that the day population of such a place as the City of London had a right to be taken into account. The fact was that property was so valuable in the City of London, that, although he might make an exception in the case of one or two wards, yet, generally, people found it too expensive to reside in it, and for their own convenience they went elsewhere. He recollected that, 30 or 40 years ago, Macaulay in an eloquent passage described the change that time had produced in the City of London in the matter of population. Macaulay

showed that whereas in the time he was reviewing—namely, the time of Charles II. and the Commonwealth, many people lived in the City who now went to the West End or to the suburban districts; and the migration of the population from the City to the suburbs and to the country had largely increased even since Macaulay's time. Many persons lived outside and came into the City day by day to carry on their regular work within its walls. He maintained that it was much more reasonable to include in the Parliamentary Census of a City the people who spent their working lives within its limits than to confine themselves to the sleeping population; and he thought that a man ought to have a vote for the place in which he spent his working life, rather than for the place to which, having done a hard day's work in the City, he proceeded for the purpose of repose. This seemed to him a very strong point. They had, according to the day Census, 261,000 people spending their days in the City. *The City Directory* gave 50,000 names, and these were people who, for the most part, were employers. Many of these gentlemen kept a large number of clerks. He maintained that, as it was during the day that the most important transactions took place in the City, the electoral importance of the place should be tested during the day, and that if they took the day Census of 261,000, they would find that the City of London was more entitled to four Members than Bristol was, with its population of 206,000. They would find that the population of the City of London was only a little less than the population of Sheffield, which was to have five Members. It might be said that this 261,000 was not an exact figure, and he did not pledge himself to it; but he argued that where a man spent his life, or most of his time, day by day—all his working hours—that was the place to which he ought to be said to belong; but, admitting, for a moment, that the figure he had quoted was not exact, he could not believe that the 50,000 was a fair figure. He would propose, as a compromise, that they should take half the day Census and add it to the night Census, which would give them 180,500, or a larger population than any three-Member constituency. It must be borne in mind that the whole of this was an adult male population. He did not mean to say that there would not be included in this number some young clerks under 21 years of age; but they would all be old enough to take part in the affairs of life, and to be either *bonâ fide* engaged in commerce, or, at all events, getting their mercantile education in the City. With regard to the rating question, the rating qualification had been abandoned from the Bill; but if its rateable value were taken into consideration, the City of London would be entitled to seven Members. He did not know that he ought to press this argument; but, at the same time, he would like it to be borne in mind, as it very much strengthened the force of the City claims on other grounds. With regard to the Livery vote, it was a statutory vote, and had been recognized in previous Reform Bills. As the Committee were aware, prior to 1832 the Livery were the sole electors for the City of London. Those privileges were continued in that year, and they were extended in the Act of 1867. The Committee would recollect that in 1867 London was represented, he believed, by his hon. Colleague whom he saw opposite, and also by an hon. Gentleman whom they all very much respected and whom most of them remembered—Mr. Crawford; and when he referred to this Gentleman's name he might declare that a more admirable commercial Member never sat in the House. He very much regretted the absence on this occasion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). That right hon Gentleman had promised to support his Motion, and if he had not been compelled to go out of town, he unquestionably would have cordially endorsed what he (Mr. Fowler) was saying. Mr. Crawford had introduced a clause into the Act of 1867 which extended the distance in regard to which the voters of the City of London could vote from seven miles to 21 miles. The Gentleman who introduced that was, as he had said, a very admirable Member for the City—one whom everybody considered most worthily represented the City; but he was also a very much respected Member of the Party opposite. He was a man of unimpeachable Liberal principles; therefore, if he (Mr. Fowler) mentioned the fact that this clause was introduced by Mr. Crawford, hon. Gentlemen opposite would admit that it was

a provision made by a good authority, and came to them with a tolerable recommendation. When Parliament, on the two occasions he had referred to, sanctioned the Livery vote, it must have been, he thought, because they felt that the Liverymen of the City of London were a body of men thoroughly entitled to share in the responsibility of sending Members to Parliament. The Committee had recently had a very interesting debate upon the subject of the representation of the Universities. Some hon. Members below the Gangway opposite had endeavoured to do away with the University representation; but the Committee, by a very large majority, had maintained the principle that Universities ought to continue to send Members to Parliament. Of course, the constituency of the City of London was, in some respects, similar to a University constituency. A University constituency was composed of men of learning and men of literary attainments, and of scientific men. London was somewhat different in these respects; but it comprised among its voters the first commercial men in the world, and he urged as strongly as he could the advantage of having such a class represented. It was urged, the other night, with great force, that it was desirable that the Universities should be represented, because they were able to send intellectual men to the House; and, in the same way, he would maintain that it was desirable that the City of London should be well represented, because the City of London contained a great community whose trading and commercial interests were the greatest in the world. No doubt, it would be said that it was all very well to urge this, but that the Bill gave a very large increase to the representation of the Metropolis. No doubt, the number of Metropolitan Representatives had been very largely increased, and that though two Members would be taken away from the City, yet there would be an increase elsewhere within the Metropolitan radius; but, to his mind, that was not satisfactory. The hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Magniac), as they knew, represented a borough; but he saw from the papers that he proposed to represent a county constituency in the next Parliament. He was afraid that eminent merchants, like his hon. Friend, would not be so anxious to seek City representation in future, as they would be to put up for county constituencies. The place with which a man was most connected was the place where he carried on his daily life, and not necessarily where he slept. For instance, although his hon. Friend (Mr. Long)—a young man who gave promise of a great future in that House, who bore a Parliamentary name of six centuries, and who was the only man who filled the seat in that House which was held by his ancestors in the days of Henry III.—who represented his own county was an admirable county Member, and was well acquainted with all agricultural questions, yet he was hardly the sort of man he, as a banker, would send to represent him in the House of Commons; and there were a number of similar cases which would apply elsewhere. He thought they would find that the class of men who would be elected for the City of London were not the same class of men who would be returned for Metropolitan constituencies as a rule. By taking away two Members from the City of London, they were practically taking away two mercantile men from that House. He dared say there would be an increase of force along the banks of the Thames, which would have the effect of bringing more shipping men into the House; but he ventured to say that it was likely that, in taking away these two Members, they were taking away two authorities on commercial matters, and replacing them with Members who, however good, had not the same qualification. He thanked the Committee for listening to him, and contended that no case had been made out for the alteration proposed by the Bill, which would distinctly lower the character of the House, and urged the Committee to support the Amendment which he had the honour to propose.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 6, to leave out the words "The City of London shall return two Members and no more, and."—(*Mr. R. N. Fowler.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. Member for the City of London had made a very excellent speech in favour of his Amendment, had put his case in a very moderate way, and had stated very clearly the grounds he re-

lied upon in support of it. He had certainly made the most of his case; but he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would have to state to the Committee the reasons which had weighed with those who had had to consider this matter against the proposal the hon. Member made. The hon. Member said that this was a very similar question to that of University representation which they were considering a few days ago. On that occasion he had frankly admitted to the Committee that he was hostile to University representation, and he had been blamed for his frankness; but he could not help thinking that what he said on that occasion was right. On this occasion he found himself in a different position, and was in entire sympathy with the Bill. This matter of the representation of the City of London was considered at the same time as that of the representation of Universities when the Bill was being drafted, and after full consideration it had been decided in the way in which it now appeared in the Bill. His hon. Friend had told the Committee that the City of London was the first City in the world. No doubt, in one sense of the word, London was the first City in the world. But that meant London as the Metropolis, as known to foreign countries and the inhabitants of the country generally. London in this sense extended very far beyond the limits of the City; but surely his hon. Friend would not contend that the City of London in the limited sense—in the Parliamentary sense—of the word was the first City in the world. [Mr. R. N. FOWLER: Commercially.] He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) contended that the commerce of London extended far beyond the limits of the City. Even some of the most important commercial ports were outside the boundaries of the City. The docks and shipping extended far beyond the City; and again in the City of Westminster very large commercial interests were involved. To the City of London in the wider sense of the word—namely, as meaning the Metropolis—the Bill gave a very large increase of representation. The area of the new Metropolis for Parliamentary purposes would be the local government area, which was only slightly larger than the present Parliamentary Metropolis. At the present time they had 22 Members representing the Metropolis; but they now proposed to give 59, although the area was very much the same in both cases. The hon. Member had spoken of there being a very large number of electors in the City; but he had forgotten to speak of the peculiar franchise which existed in the City of London—the franchise which had been described in strong terms as being scandalous, and as amounting virtually to the sale of the franchise for money. He would not speak strongly of it; but he would describe it as an altogether peculiar franchise, which had been condemned by the majority of a very weighty Royal Commission. Then, again, the condition of residence, which in other constituencies was restricted to seven miles, was in the case of the City extended to 25 miles. Therefore, a very large proportion of the electors of the City of London was accounted for by the peculiar treatment of the City. The proposal of this Bill, it was true, had been based on population; but the City of London had been made an exception. In consideration of its ancient history and position it had been allowed double representation; and whereas all the other Metropolitan boroughs would be single-Member constituencies, the City of London would retain its present boundaries, and would return two Members. For this he had expected the gratitude of the hon. Alderman. If the City of London had been treated altogether on the basis of population, as they had treated other districts in accordance with the Metropolitan scheme, it would only have been entitled to one Member; but instead of that they had given it two. Each Metropolitan Member would, according to the Bill, represent on an average 65,000 persons, while the City of London had considerably under 60,000 by the night Census; so that it was getting more, according to population, than twice—between twice and three times—the ordinary representation to which its population was entitled. His hon. Friend had spoken of the extraordinary manner in which the Census in the City was taken; but it was a remarkable thing that there was hardly any portion of the United Kingdom which did not complain of the same thing. In the case of many fishing towns it seemed as if the whole male population were catching herrings on the day that the Census was taken. The

hon. Member had not been quite fair in the comparisons he made of London and other cities. He drew a comparison with the City of Bristol. It was true that there were 18,000 odd persons possessing the occupation franchise in London, and it was true that there were only 23,000 in the present City of Bristol. But the City of Bristol had been largely extended, and the number of electors largely increased by the Bill. The hon. Member had rather ignored the tender manner in which this Bill and the Franchise Act dealt with all the ancient franchises of the City. He had said that people ought to be returned where they carried on their business; but they did not touch the franchise in the City of London by this Bill, and therefore persons who carried on their business in London would continue to have a vote there. The real question in this case was, whether they should take Members from other districts of the Metropolis in order to give more than double or treble its proper representation to the City. Upon the point as to where the two additional Members asked for on behalf of the City were to come from the hon. Member had been silent. He had thrown out no suggestion whatever as to the quarter whence they should be drawn. Were he dealing with a less august body than the City of London, he should say it was idle and futile to make proposals for increasing the total number of seats without saying where they were to come from. At the present moment the great bulk of the constituencies were short of their proper proportion of Representatives. Tenderness to existing interests had done much to diminish the fund of Members available to supply constituencies that were properly entitled to more Representatives. Owing to this tenderness, the whole of the great boroughs of the country were less represented than they ought to be, and some were making strong objections at present; and if more Members were to be taken away from them they would be still further unrepresented. The hon. Member had founded his argument, that the Census was unfair, on the smallness of the night population of the City. That was no doubt so, but it was nearly as unfair to the several districts created by the Bill, which contained great commercial houses and offices, and which had been separated into distinct constituencies. There was Mid-Birmingham, Central Bradford, Hull, Leeds, Liverpool, Sheffield, and Glasgow. In all those cases the Boundary Commissioners had so divided the great cities as to make a nucleus of their commercial centres. The test of the Census population was no doubt unfair to all those places; but it must be remembered that all the gentlemen having offices there had their houses in other parts, and voted in more than one place. London was specially favoured in this respect, for the radius of residence was three times as great as in other constituencies. The hon. Member had contended that mercantile interests deserved special representation in that House, and everybody would agree with him; in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government mercantile interests were likely to be more largely represented under this Bill than they had been in the past. They believed that the single-Member system was likely to lead to more distinct representation of the great mercantile centres than had ever been the case before. Looking at all these considerations, he must ask the Committee whether the hon. Member had not failed to make out a case for increasing the very liberal representation which the City of London, in consequence of its ancient privileges, was accorded by the Bill.

Mr. RITCHIE said, the right hon. Gentleman had commenced his remarks with a most extraordinary proposition. He had cast a doubt on the fact that London was the greatest commercial City in the world, and stated that that description rather applied to the whole of London than to the City proper; and in illustration of his argument he had mentioned that ships did not come into the City, but into docks lower down the river. The right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that all transactions in regard to those ships were carried on in the City itself. It was not only these shipping interests, however, that were involved, for all the commercial interests which it was possible to conceive centred themselves in the City proper. He might say, in fact, that London was the mercantile centre, not only of the whole country, but almost of the world. Therefore, he thought that the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler) in saying that Lon-

don was the chief City in the world, was saying that which everybody who knew anything about the City would say was perfectly correct. They were not now proposing to give the City something more than it had hitherto enjoyed; had they been doing so, it would have been a very different matter. They were not proposing to increase the Members for the City; but they were opposing the taking away of two Members from it. They were lowering the position and power of the City and diminishing its *prestige* by taking away from it two Members, which it had enjoyed the right of sending to Parliament for 550 years. They admitted that for nearly six centuries the City of London had enjoyed exceptional privileges as the chief commercial centre of the country, and no reason had been shown by the Government for taking them away. The only reason that could be seen was that the City of London now contained a considerable Conservative majority; but they, on that side of the House at least, did not see that that was a reason for reducing its representation. His hon. Friend the Member for the City had spoken of the enormous rateable value of the City, and the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had spoken of the great antiquity of the City and its institutions, and he thought those matters ought to be taken into account before they ruthlessly took away part of its representation. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), speaking some years ago, said that the people of London were identified with the City; that the great majority, although they did not live there, had occupied premises all their lives there, and spent a large portion of their lives in the City. He had no doubt the right hon. Gentleman would be prepared to repeat that statement. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had taken his hon. Friend to task for having compared the number of electors in the City with the number of electors in Bristol. Now, suppose they deducted the 7,000 freemen, who were enjoying what the right hon. Gentleman had called "this peculiar franchise," it still left the number of electors in the City at 20,000. He would ask the right Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) to compare the position which he proposed to give to the City of London with the position of Belfast under this Bill. He took it that there were 21,000 electors in Belfast, which was to return four Members. Well, if they struck out the 7,000 gentlemen who possessed the peculiar franchise which the right hon. Gentleman objected to, they would have the City, with 20,000 electors, having only two Members, compared with Belfast, with 1,000 more electors and two more Members. But if they went to a town in Ireland they saw a still more remarkable difference; and he would like the right hon. Baronet to give his attention to him upon this point, as he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had made some comments upon it. Take Dublin, there the electors were only 13,785, and they returned four Members; and yet the right hon. Gentleman proposed to take away from 20,000 *bonâ fide* electors of the City two Members, leaving them only two.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: That is on the present franchise.

MR. RITCHIE: No doubt there will be some difference in the number of electors in Dublin under the new franchise.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: And there will be considerable difference in Belfast by the extension of its boundaries.

MR. RITCHIE: How with regard to Dublin?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: There the franchise is different.

MR. RITCHIE: Does the right hon. Baronet mean to say that the new franchise will give 50 per cent more voters to Dublin?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: No; but it will give an increase.

MR. RITCHIE said, he did not think the new franchise would increase the number of electors in Dublin so much as the right hon. Gentleman expected; at any rate it would not make up the difference between the number of voters in Dublin and those in the City of London. Then, if they took the question of population, the attitude of the Government would not bear critical examination. His contention was that the City should be, and always had been, treated in an exceptional manner. The City had a population of 50,526 at night. Now, let them see how the City would be represented in comparison with some of the smaller towns which were

to have one Member. He had in his hand a list of four of the small boroughs which, together, had a population of 61,000; and that population of 61,000 in these small boroughs were to return four Members. They were to have four petty boroughs possessing this great representation; and yet the City of London, with upwards of 50,000 of night population, and 260,000 of a day population, was to return only two Members. He contended that the City of London had good ground to complain of the manner in which the Government proposed to treat it. Considering its commercial importance, its ancient history, he thought the City of London ought to have continued to receive the special consideration which it had enjoyed for the past 500 years. He again said, in conclusion, that if it were a question of giving new additional privileges to London, the question might be different; but that was not the question. The question was not the giving new Members, but the taking away seats which existed, and he maintained the Government had made out no case to justify this action.

Mr. Alderman COTTON said, he rose with some reluctance to make some remarks on the Amendment now before the Committee, and he did so because they were told that a compact had been entered into by three Gentlemen representing one side of the House, and two Gentlemen representing the other—because they were told that they were to be bound by the opinion or the contract entered into by those five Gentlemen when they met to arrange matters in secret. Up to the present time the Committee had had no particulars of this secret compact. It was only as time went on, and one scheme after another developed itself, that the Committee saw what it meant. It was plain that night that the compact meant, amongst other things, that the City of London was to lose two of its Members. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister ought to cast his mind back upon the traditions of the City of London. The City of London had always been Liberal in its policy and in its politics until 1874, with very few exceptions, which exceptions were only in the interests of some particularly favourite Member whom the citizens desired to honour. It was entirely the right hon. Gentleman's own fault that the electorate in the City had been turned into a Conservative body instead of a Liberal one. But what had been done once might be done again; the City might not always be Conservative; and he, therefore, sincerely hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would see fit to leave the City its present number of Members. The right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke), in speaking of the Livery of the City of London, had been a little at fault with regard to the number of the Livery. Assuming the electorate were 20,000 without the Livery, they must bear in mind that very large numbers of the Livery had a vote for occupation. They were entitled to vote for occupying if they did not vote as Liverymen; and very many men voted as occupiers instead of as Liverymen. But with regard to the Livery, he was bound to say that, with all the fault-finding about their voting for Members for the City of London, he did not think there was any more responsible, or more respectable, or any more modest, body of voters than the Liverymen of the City of London. It appeared to be the present disposition of the Government in this Parliament to set aside everything that was respectable, and to push forward everything that was Democratic and trivial. He disputed the right of the Government to define population as "sleeping population" in any city whatever. Surely a day population of a city or borough was entitled to its share of the representation in Parliament. When they considered that the day population was over 260,000, and that amongst them were a very large number of employers, and that it was only the *employés* who slept within the City, they would see how large a number of people were entitled to the consideration of the Committee. The City, in his judgment, was one of the most important, one of the grandest, and one of the wealthiest cities in the world. He did not know anything that did not exist within its one mile of area. That mile was the most valuable mile of land in the world; and within it, as the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) had told them, they had shipping, merchants, ship-brokers, the Bank of England, 84 or 86 other banking interests—so that, so far as the banking interests were concerned, they were

amply represented—and it was really the wheel that moved the whole of the finance of the world. The Bank of England, which was within the City, was the source that the Government looked to when it had any great financial project in view or to bring about. Then, again, the Press, which was so mighty in its power, was most largely represented in the City. There was scarcely a Metropolitan daily paper whose office was not within the walls of the City; and most of the weekly papers were also published within its limits. Take the literature of the day. Was it not represented in Paternoster Row, or the large publishing firms which carried on business there; did not these firms push into every house, and bring home to every family circle literature that was wise, and good, and elevating? Travel on further, they found that nearly all the railway stations, the centres of the trading of the country, were within the City walls. The termini of the Great Western, and some others, were not within it, it was true; but these lines were brought within it by the instrumentality of the Inner Circle Railway. Men of all classes and of all positions threw themselves into the City of London, in order to seek employment to obtain a livelihood. There were more distinguished foreign merchants within the City of London, who had emigrated over here and become wealthy and great, than were to be found in any other city of the Kingdom. He could not call to mind any industry that was not represented, in some way or other, in some one of the offices of the City of London. He had himself tried in vain to find out why the Government had endeavoured to take away two of the City Members. He could only put it down to the matter of pique, he could not have put it down to any other feeling whatever. The City represented great intelligence, particularly financial intelligence, and all the interests of the Kingdom. Manchester sent its goods to the City, also Birmingham, Sheffield, and other great towns, in order that the proper markets of the world might be supplied. Under all these circumstances, that the City was entitled to four Members there could hardly be a doubt. The Petition of the City was to the effect that the City of London claimed to be placed on an equality with the Universities in its representation, and that it ought not to lose any of its Members. It stated that the population was large; and if his argument were accepted, that in reckoning that population they should consider not only the sleeping inhabitants, but the day population as well, then a very strong argument indeed had been made out in favour of retaining the present number of Members. The right hon. Baronet had spoken of double votes; but he (Mr. Alderman Cotton) supposed there was scarcely a Member in that House who did not give a double vote in some way or other; and if, simply owing to the value of land in the City, householders chose to let the upper part of their houses and lived in the country, it was unjust to tell them they should lose half the vote which they had hitherto enjoyed. Nearly all other large cities were similarly situated, a great many of their inhabitants residing outside the City limits. All the merchants of Liverpool did not live in the city; but they crossed over the Mersey, or resided somewhere in the suburbs or in the country. He had no doubt the Prime Minister now and then retired into the country to recoup that strength which he had exhausted in the House, and might be possessed of a double vote. Therefore, a double vote was not peculiar to persons in the City of London. The assertion of the right hon. Baronet that the loss of two Members was but a Corporation feeling was not correct. The Corporation, of course, were anxious to retain the four Members for the City; but there was not a citizen in London with whom he had conversed who did not view with extreme ill favour the proposal to take away these two Members. It was a citizen's question; it was a question which concerned everyone. Even the Chamber of Commerce, presided over by a Liberal Member of that House, had expressed its disapprobation of the proposal; and he sincerely hoped that when this discussion concluded and the arguments which could be used in favour of the retention of the present number of Members had been pressed upon the attention of the Prime Minister, that he would see his way to leave the City its four votes. The right hon. Baronet had asked him (Mr. Alderman Cotton) to tell the Government from what constituency they should take the two votes which they were asking

to have restored to them. To put that responsibility upon the City Representatives was rather hard, seeing that it was the Government themselves who were taking the Members away and giving them to other places. Let the right hon. Baronet determine from what constituencies he would take these two Members. There were very many small constituencies which had never enjoyed a vote before who were to be enfranchised from which these two could be taken; and he had no doubt that as the Bill progressed the opportunity of obtaining Members for the purpose of restoring to the City of London her proper quota would be found easily enough. He was at a loss to account for the altered tone of the Government with regard to the City of London, for he remembered when this scheme was first foreshadowed, and public opinion was to be tested, one of the morning papers indulged the world with a statement with regard to the measure, and one of the points in that statement was that the City was to have its four Members. It was not until the famous interview took place between the Leaders of the two Parties that the City of London learnt, with dismay and astonishment, that it was to lose two of its seats. Though that compact had been entered into, he hoped that Members on both sides of the Committee would not allow it to weigh with them in carrying out all the suggestions of the Government. It was one of the most dangerous interviews that ever took place as against the privileges of that House. If the 658 Members of the House were to be guided and governed by a conclave of five—upon which it must be remembered the Government were 50 per cent to the good, the Prime Minister, Earl Granville, and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board being on their side, and the Marquess of Salisbury and the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition on the other—they ought to know it at once, so as to know how to submit to the inevitable. But he hoped such a compact as that would never be entered into again. He was sure that hon. Members on the Liberal side of the House, who felt a strong desire for the liberty of the subject, would never tolerate such a thing being done again. It was only because they were so near the eve of the General Election that the Liberal Members allowed it on the present occasion. Generally there was no desire to go to the country for the next six or nine months. All that he had said was merely in the interest of the retention of the four Members for the City of London; and he asked the Prime Minister not to take this representation away from the City, but to leave to them their old traditions in that truly liberal spirit which the Liberal Party had always experienced on the part of the City of London in their dealings with it up to the year 1874. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman, with his usual foresight, would see that in the time to come, in all probability when another wave of change occurred, the City might, perhaps, be Liberal again. He (Mr. Alderman Cotton) had great pleasure in supporting the Amendment moved by his hon. Friend (Mr. R. N. Fowler).

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, they were told when the Bill was brought in that it was not a disfranchising measure. That was clearly a misnomer so far as the City of London was concerned. He approved of the Bill generally, but did think that the City of London had been hardly dealt with. In the first place, the Census had been taken as the basis of population, and for deciding the different constituencies to remain under the Bill. Well, the Census of the City of London taken on a Sunday night could not be, under any circumstances, an adequate representation of what the City really was. In every large town the Sunday night population must be considerably less, or very much less, than what it would be on other nights; but in London that would be especially the case. He did not believe that any man who could possibly get away from London on Saturday afternoon, or Saturday evening, and would otherwise sleep in the City, would neglect the opportunity. A great many of the ordinary dwellers in the City left it on the Saturday or Sunday if they could get away. Still, with all that, London was found to contain 50,000 people. If the Census had been taken on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, he had no doubt it would have been found to contain double that number. It was a question worth the consideration of the Government whether the day population was not, after all, a better representation of the con-

stituency than a night population. The time at which man's brains were most active, and at which man was most useful to his fellow man and to himself, was during those 10 or 12 hours of work in which the citizens of London were engaged during the day. Those people who remained in London all night were, for the most part, care-takers and others employed by those who used the houses for business purposes and who themselves went miles away. It must be evident to everyone who thought about the matter that the day population alone could represent the absolute feelings of the people of the City. But there were many other reasons why the City should be specially dealt with. Its rateable value, for example, which had been referred to by the hon. Alderman who had just sat down (Mr. Alderman Cotton), was, for its area, larger than that of any other place in the world. The people who frequented London, and who up to the present time had had the honour of filling these four seats, represented larger interests than any other people in the world of the same class; and it seemed the most extraordinary thing to find the Government taking away representation from them and giving it to other parts of the country, which they chose to call London, such as Mile End, Kensington, and so on. That to him seemed like giving to the fingers and toes and taking away from the heart. The commerce and the finance of the whole world centred in London; and the population during the day ran up to five times what it was during the night. These 260 000 people who were in London, day by day, as he had said, did not confine their connection or their business to London alone, or to the Metropolis, but extended it to India, to America, to Africa, and to all Continental countries; they were the agents of, and did the business of, people living all over the world. How could even such towns as Liverpool, Birmingham, and Manchester compare with London? There was one other point which was worthy of consideration. London had for over 500 years returned her four Members; it had always been specially represented in that House; and when they knew that they were taking away Members from small towns, and when Liverpool would be represented by nine Members, Manchester by 9 or 10, surely it was not too much to ask that London should remain specially represented as it was at present. Manchester might represent cotton, Liverpool shipping, and Birmingham the metal trade. These were all special trades; no doubt important ones, but still individual trades. Well, the whole of those were represented in London. All the trades of the other towns had their representatives in London, and outside itself London represented an enormous connection. It represented, he might say, almost the whole world. That being so, it seemed to him that there was a very fair case made out against the proposal of the Government; and he certainly believed that if the Prime Minister and the right hon. Baronet the Head of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) in that House could be got to sit down together for a few minutes to consider the question quietly and calmly they would be inclined to accede to the appeal of the City. Even if the question were withdrawn now from the vote of the Committee and allowed to come on again on Report, he believed that these right hon. Gentlemen, having heard the debate that had taken place that night, would consent to drop the proposal in the Bill. He was well aware of the difficulty the hon. Member for the City (Mr. R. N. Fowler) had to face in bringing this question to a vote at the present moment. The hon. Member had against him not only the Government and its present supporters, who seemed to forget that the highest honour they could have in the House was the position of an independent Member, but he had also against him his own Leader, and those who sat with the right hon. Gentleman and were pledged to act with him. He did think that if the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, who had been induced to go into this unholy alliance, could be induced to confer with the Government upon the point at issue, they would find it easy to propose that the question of restoration in the Bill of four Members to London would be considered before the Report.

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, he was rather loth to rise in his place for the purpose of continuing this discussion, because he should have liked very much to have heard some Member from the other side of the Committee in answer to the arguments which had come from hon. Members interested in the City.

[*Fourth Night.*]

As, however, no one had risen to answer those arguments, he would endeavour to offer the Committee a few observations which had occurred to him in reference to this Bill, and the particular portion which proposed to deprive London of half of its representation. Now, the first part of the Bill was what might be termed a disfranchising portion. They had already passed Section 1, putting into the Schedule those places which were not for the future to return any Members. They had included certain cities and counties in the same category. They had disfranchised the small boroughs found guilty of corrupt practices, and now this last disfranchisement section, Section 4, came before them, proposing at the commencement to disfranchise the City of London, and then taking from other boroughs, which were in another Schedule, one Member each. When the Bill was introduced, or rather before it was introduced, when the Prime Minister shadowed out to the House in consequence of some accident which had occurred by which the general process and course on the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill was made known to the country, and when a certain occasion was taken in "another place" with regard to the Act for giving to the counties household suffrage, the Prime Minister announced to the House his views relative to the distribution of seats which had become necessary in consequence of the Franchise Bill. The right hon. Gentleman, after enumerating certain particulars, had stated that the City of London had a considerable claim, and a special claim to be recognized on account of its ancient character, and on account of the position it enjoyed, not only in this country, but in the world at large. The right hon. Gentleman stated at the commencement of his observations, with reference to the principle on which the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill would be passed, that he took the Census as a rough and ready mode, though not the very best mode, of determining the allocation of Members. But there were certain exceptions, and that if exceptions were to be made at all the City of London was fairly, and fully, and specially entitled to have the benefit of them. What was the Census to begin with. If they took the general application of the word a Census was a mere enumeration of the families living in a certain place at a certain period. The enumeration was effected all over the area in which it was desired to ascertain the numbers at a certain time, so that it could be done as correctly as possible; and they endeavoured to extend that Census to a variety of other subjects beyond mere enumeration—beyond the mere calculation of numbers—namely, the proportions of so many males, so many females, so many children, so many residents in towns, their avocations, their callings, how they were engaged in the day, how they were classified with regard to servants, with regard to agricultural employment, and with regard to trade and manufacture. Returns giving these details were required for special purposes. They wanted them to guide their views as legislators with reference to the administration of the revenues and taxation of the country, and with reference to the general government of it, and by merely taking in that case numbers without any consideration as to the other points on which Censuses were directed they did not arrive at much valuable information. If they looked at the origin of the Census they would find that it was not a mere compilation of numbers, but that it referred to the various duties that the old Roman Censor had to perform, and embraced the physical and general arrangements of the community. The old principle of Census taking had been adopted in nearly all European States during the Middle Ages, and in later times as one of the means of ascertaining how taxation could be fairly imposed upon the community. In the Census of 1881 in this country they had gone further, and had endeavoured to take a religious Census. That had been objected to by the House, and no such attempt had been made since. The Census imposed by Parliament, and which was required to be taken throughout the United Kingdom, had had for its object other purposes than the mere enumeration of the people separately, the classification of professions and occupations, and the amount of property that they were possessed of—it had other objects than the mere counting of heads in order that it might be said how many millions of people there were at such a time in such an area. In the case he was now dealing with, the position of

the City of London, the amount of wealth for which its citizens were responsible, to a certain extent, justified them in coming to the House of Commons when a Redistribution of Seats Bill was being discussed, to see that its wealth and its trading interests were adequately represented. It was necessary that the City of London should have good representation in that House, so that her interests might be carefully attended to in connection with subjects which were coming before the House almost every day, with reference to the wealth of this country and their dealings with foreigners, in reference to the shipping interest especially. That was one of the matters that the Representatives of the City were specially interested in, and it was a matter which had occupied the time of the House during the last two or three Sessions in an especial manner. It was necessary that the City should have power in that House in order that foreign countries would know that in the all-important Court of Parliament in England the interests of traders and business men were fully represented. Let them look at what the position of London was as one of the great trading communities of the world. Not only geographically, but commercially, London was the centre of everything connected with Europe and with the trade of the East. It had almost exclusively the trade with China and the East; it had an enormous amount of Atlantic trade notwithstanding the position of Liverpool, and the amount of tonnage of vessels during the last year had exceeded 10,000,000. The trade carried on by those vessels amounted to no less than £200,000,000. Well, did they wish it to go forth to the world that a great City like this, which had received the confidence of all nations, was to be deprived of half of its representation? He looked upon it as a most monstrous proposition to deprive a community of 261,000 people of half their representation in the House of Commons for the simple reason that they only left caretakers on their premises at night. *The Encyclopædia Britannica* said that in London there was a sleeping population in 1871 of 70,000, but it had diminished in 1881 to 50,000 odd; but, at the same time, that the actual number of occupiers of the City, as ascertained by a careful enumeration—by a careful statistical calculation taken by papers sent round to the different residences—amounted to 261,000 odd, and included men of the highest commercial character, of great wealth and integrity and business habits.

MR. FIRTH: The hon. Member would not voluntarily, I am sure, state that which is contrary to the official Census; the figures he gives are——[*Cries of* "Order!"]

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, that in order to be quite accurate he was quoting from a new edition of *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, an edition published in 1882.

MR. FIRTH: I have here the City Census——[*Cries of* "Order!"]

SIR GABRIEL GOLDNEY said, that what he was quoting from was accepted as an authority. He could refer to a variety of private statistics; but he thought it to be more satisfactory to the Committee to give figures from such an authority as that. *The Encyclopædia Britannica* was published in 1882, and could have had no possible connection with the present Bill. The Return was obtained before the Parliamentary Elections Redistribution) Bill was thought of, and, indeed, before the extension of the franchise was brought to anything like a practical issue. The day Census, according to *The Encyclopædia Britannica* was 261,061; although in 1871 the night Census was only 74,897, and in 1881 50,536. Now, the rough and ready basis the Prime Minister took in announcing to the House the scheme on which the redistribution of seats would be arranged was most objectionable. The right hon. Gentleman had said that taking the boroughs and counties together it would give, as near as possible, a ratio of 54,200 per Member, but that London, from its position, should be exceptionally considered, not only with regard to numbers, but also as to the surrounding circumstances which were likely to affect its general claim to legislation. If it was to be exceptionally considered and to have all its surroundings taken into view, this day population must be borne in mind. If the population of the City were taken at this real figure of 261,000, its number of Members would not be four, but five or six. He did not ask for an increase, but he protested against a decrease, and maintained that

if persisted in it would be a great slur upon the first City of the world It was not only prejudicial to the citizens of London, who were composed of all classes, of all politics, but a disparagement to the whole nation. The citizens of London wished to have their ancient status retained; and it would be a disparagement, even with regard to their financial and banking arrangements, to have their representation reduced one-half, when there was no decline, but the reverse, in all the important interests which were involved in its business transactions. The citizens of London considered that it would be a slur not only upon their City, but upon them and their financial and commercial arrangements, to have their representation, which they had enjoyed for 500 years, reduced by one-half. The commercial population of London had, so far as their dwelling were concerned, emigrated to the suburbs and the country, so as to give greater facilities for the carrying on of their commercial arrangements at their places of business in the City. By living outside they allowed greater room and scope for their businesses, and it was for doing that that the Government proposed to reduce their Parliamentary representation. It was said that the Metropolis itself was to have its number of Members largely increased, and that, therefore, the City should not complain; but he objected to the case of the City being considered on the basis of population. Although the rest of the Metropolis might be justly entitled to their increased representation, the case of the City of London should be considered upon different grounds. Had not the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister himself said that they could not in the case of a place like London apply hard and strict mathematical rules, but that they must give weight to various considerations, some of them, no doubt, conflicting, which would come before them when they were fixing and allocating the large number of Members who would fall to them from the different small boroughs which were to be disfranchised? The places disfranchised had probably shown that they had made no progress, had probably retrograded in numbers and position, and had ceased to be entitled to Parliamentary representation. All these things had to be considered. He (Sir Gabriel Goldney) represented a comparatively small borough (Chippenham), and he was quite content that it should be merged into a county, and that a larger district should be formed more fitted to return a Member to the House than the present constituency; but his contention was that the population of London materially exceeded the basis upon which they had founded their scheme of representation. As he had said, he did not ask for an increase to the representation of London; but he demanded, and thought he was entitled to demand, from the hands of the Committee and Parliament that London should remain in the same position that it had been in for so long—for one reason, because the City of London had increased enormously in its wealth and importance. The merchants of the City had heavy responsibilities to fulfil to the trade of the whole country, to the customers who came to their ports; in fact, to the trade of the whole world, which centred in their City. Their shipping had increased and the produce of their ships. It would be well for Parliament to take into consideration the important position of the City. They had France bidding against them, and very successfully in a great number of matters, both in regard to commercial arrangements, but more especially in regard to banking arrangements. It was necessary, therefore, that no slur should be cast upon their City. How could they show to their customers and the world that they were maintaining their position for integrity, and that the City of London stood as high or higher, if possible, now than it had ever done before, and in as high a position as any other capital in the world, when foreigners would see their own Parliament reducing the Parliamentary importance of the place? Most of the great financial arrangements of the Empire were carried on, not in the various parts of the Empire generally, but by the large number of traders and merchants who congregated every day in the City—by gentlemen whose foreign relations enabled them to undertake the largest transactions. Their feeling was that they deserved their present representation, not merely on account of their numbers or on account of the heavy taxes they paid, but because of their being citizens of London; and they desired that representation without reference to the sleep-

ing numbers within the walls of the City. He did not know that he could say more. If it were said—"We do not care for your numbers in the day time, what we want is your sleeping population," it amounted simply to this—that so long as people were in their beds they might be represented in the House of Commons. That was the only logical conclusion How could that sleeping argument be put to the world? Supposing this partial disfranchisement of the City of London were carried out, and he went, say, to a German, and discussed the question, what would the foreigner say to him? Why, naturally he would say—"The position of your great City seems to be disparaged very much in the eyes of other nations; what is the matter? Have any of your great bankers failed? Have any of your mercantile community brought discredit upon you? Is the commercial morality of the City as high as it was?" Foreigners regarded the City as a place to whose men of business they could intrust their money and their commissions in dependence on their character for integrity; and those gentlemen would not be able to understand the Parliamentary representation of a place, which was the centre of the world's commerce, being reduced by one-half, because the machinery of election was being revised. When was the City alive? In the day time. Foreigners did not come in the dead of the night to transact business, especially on a Sunday night; they came in the daytime, and it was therefore by her character as she stood during the day that she was to be judged. He felt this matter very strongly as a citizen of London and as an Englishman, who had endeavoured to uphold the greatness of the City, and he maintained that a slur and disparagement of the kind he was denouncing would be difficult to explain away to their foreign customers. The slur would travel much more quickly than hon. Gentlemen might believe. It would be said that London had been shorn of half its political power and was injured for centuries, and it would take a very able man to account for what had taken place. He hoped, therefore, that the Prime Minister would look on the matter from a much wider point of view than the question of the mere machinery of numbers, and that for the advantage of the City of London and the country generally he would show that confidence in the City that Parliament had been wont to repose in her.

MR. R. BIDDULPH MARTIN desired the indulgence of the Committee while he made a few observations in favour of the existing representation of the City of London. Admitting, for the moment, that the Bill was founded entirely and absolutely on a numerical basis, and that in future numbers were to be the foundation of their Constitution, there were, and must be, in the Constitution a certain number of anomalies. The City of London could make out a good case for being one of the anomalies. Except on the mere bald statement of numbers, the City of London had an absolute right, so far as right could be insisted upon by any body, or any number of people, or any constituency, to return more than its ordinary share of Members. It was well he should call the attention of the Committee to the day Census of the City. The Report of that Census, which could be taken as a very authoritative statement, disclosed some remarkable facts. There were in the City, for instance, 57,000 employers of labour, and 162,000 persons employed. There were 500 bankers save one, and of dining-room and restaurant keepers there were 593, and there were brewers and distillers in large numbers. A more anomalous state of things in a city it would be difficult to imagine. Certainly, the same state of things could not prevail in any other city of England—Liverpool, Glasgow, and the other large cities included. He mentioned these figures to show that it was hardly just to apply the principle of the numerical basis to the City of London. At the end of the Report it was shown that as many as 78,000 persons entered the City every day by one gate, and 66,000 by another gate. The City was in an altogether anomalous position, and it was for the very reason that the City had grown to be so important and the land so valuable that people could not afford to make their homes where their avocations took them, and where their business centred. He had a home in the City which he inhabited; but everybody was not so fortunate in that respect. City people, as a rule, had to go miles away to find a proper home, and, therefore, he did not think the

mere fact of numbers ought to be pressed in this instance. He hoped the Government might be able to see their way to reconsider the question. There was one other fact—he did not know whether attention had been called to it previously—which ought to be borne in mind; and that was, that if they looked at the City of London not simply as the City of London, but as an integral and the most important part of the Metropolis, the number of Representatives it had hitherto had was not in excess of the number to which it was entitled. He trusted that if the City was now deprived of two Members, it would be competent for Parliament, when it came to deal with the Bill for the redistribution of the local political power and local self-government of London, to give back to the City its two Members. He did not think there was anything at all unreasonable in asking the Committee to reconsider the question, and to allow the City, which was the heart of the whole Metropolis, to retain the right of sending four Members to the House of Commons. He did not think it was necessary to go into the mere sentiment of the subject. What they had to consider was, what was fair and just and right; and, in his opinion, the justice of the case would permit of the anomaly. It was perfectly true, as had been stated over and over again, that the people who had votes in the City had also votes in the suburban districts in which they resided. But the interests of the people were really in London; their interests in the place where they resided were nothing as compared with their interests in the City. There were Members of the present Government who were not ashamed to be seen occasionally in the City when they were not in Office; it was surely not too much to expect that they had a little sympathy with the City. Of course, he admitted that if they only took the sleeping population of the City there might possibly be no claim to four Representatives; but there were anomalies, and there always would be anomalies. Hard-and-fast lines very often created greater injustices than those they were supposed to cure. The whole of the day Census was full of interest, and it showed how necessary it was to be careful in arriving at the facts figures taught. He thought if the Government would consider the value of the figures, they would find an anomaly of a nature to be received with every consideration—a claim that might fairly be allowed. A great many Members had a greater right to speak on the details of the subject than he had, and who, no doubt, would give the Committee the benefit of their experience. He, speaking with the knowledge he had, feeling and thinking simply from a Liberal point of view, believed this was a case where an exception might be made by the Government to their hard-and-fast "resident" line.

SIR JOHN HAY said, perhaps the Committee would forgive him for saying a few words, both as a citizen of London, an honour of which he was extremely proud, and also as one who had paid considerable attention to the details of redistribution of seats. So far as the debate had gone, all the argument had been in favour of maintaining the old number of the City Representatives. Neither from the occupants of the Treasury Bench, or from the great guns opposite them who had betrayed the City to the enemy, had he heard one argument in favour of reducing the number of Members from four to two. It was true, four Members had represented the City of London so long as Parliament had existed; it was also certain the Bill proposed to give to Edinburgh four Representatives; and while reducing London from four to two, the Capital of Ireland, with other favours shown to Ireland by the Bill, had its representation increased. Those arrangements were consequent upon the unfortunate compact by which an enormous increase of representation was given to Ireland and Wales, while that of England and Scotland was reduced below the number to which they were fairly entitled. It was quite well known that if 103 Members were given to Ireland there ought to be 770 for the whole House. Even with 658 Members the Representatives of England were six below the number to which the country was entitled, and of these two should go to the City of London. The fact of the Census being taken on a Sunday night fully accounted for there being so many persons absent from the City on that occasion; but the time at which votes would be given was surely the time at which it was natural a Census should be taken in regard to the electorate. He

had had the honour of recording his vote at Guildhall occasionally for his right hon. Friends; and he would venture to say that no City in the world was so densely populated as the City of London at the time of an election, 26,000 recording their votes in a population of 270,000 of the most orderly character in a City whose business was quadruple that of any town in the world. By the arrangements now pending it was proposed—he supposed because the City returned three Conservative Members—to reduce the number of Members by two; and he had not heard one single argument in favour of the proposal offered by the hon. Gentlemen who silently advocated the Bill, or the absentees who had deserted the Front Opposition Bench. Something should be said at least to support the intention to deprive the Capital of England of two Members, while, at the same time, two were added to the Radical City of Edinburgh, and two to the City of Dublin. It was quite impossible by any argument to justify such a change. In fair arithmetical proportion five Members should be allotted to the City; but that did not seem to enter into the calculations of those who framed the Bill. He was glad to see his right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) had not deserted the discussion, and should be glad to hear what his right hon. Friend had to say on the subject—why should the Capital of England have its Members reduced, while the Capitals of Scotland and Ireland received additions. In the proposition he recognized one of the great evils that resulted from an agreement delivering them over bound hand and foot into the hands of the enemy. It must be quite obvious to those who recognized how Parliamentary affairs were conducted that this great misfortune to the Metropolis of the world would not have occurred if his right hon. Friend and those who acted with him had stood their ground firmly. He felt strongly that a grave injustice was threatened which the Committee ought at once to remedy.

MR. FIRTH said, he spoke as a City elector with a certain amount of difficulty. He had been anxious—and that was the reason why he had been waiting—to hear the whole of his four Representatives uphold their cause. The second worthy Alderman who represented him as a City elector said that the City that night was pleading for its life, and no doubt, to a certain extent, that was so. To those who had had the advantage of so large a representation as had City electors it was somewhat of a "Self-denying Ordinance" to ask to have that representation reduced by half; but after giving it the best consideration he could, just as the other night he voted to take away a vote from his University, so that night he proposed to vote with Her Majesty's Government to reduce his representation in the City. There were points certainly that might be urged that had not been urged yet in favour of the retention of four Members. The time would come, and that before long, when the Metropolis would claim and probably receive its adequate quota of Members. The borough for which he at present had the honour to be a Member (Chelsea) would have five Members; it had a population of 423,000, being an average of 80,000 odd to each proposed Member. It was idle to pretend or suggest that they were going to be content with that share; they would accept this Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill to-day, but they would contest it to-morrow; by to-morrow he meant the morrow of the day on which it passed; and when the time came for London to have its fair share of Members, if the City were left with four there would be three seats on the shelf for the rest of the Metropolis; but if the City Members were reduced to two there would be only one on the shelf. Again, it was possible that City Aldermen would lose the last refuge for that interesting class of the community; he did not think that any other borough would do itself the honour of returning them. He had his share of three, and if half were taken away he found it difficult to conclude which half he would be more sorry to lose. He would not enter upon their many virtues, but the Committee would credit him with an adequate amount of regret at the prospect. He interrupted his hon. Friend (Sir Gabriel Goldney) in speaking of the population of the City because his hon. Friend quoted *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, while he (Mr. Firth) founded his information on a much higher authority—he went back from the treatise to the original authority. He always found difficulty with City figures in settling their reliability;

and, therefore, he went o the original Report as drawn up and presented by the City authorities, and that showed that those who stated there were 261,000 occupiers stated something that the City did not contend for in its own Report. But first one word on the Census of population, for, as he understood it, the basis of the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill was population. Hon. Members on the other side suggested that the day and not the night population should be taken; but taking the night population as 50,276, of that number more than 41,000 were women and children, therefore the first point to which he drew the attention of the Committee was this—that when the day came—and he apprehended it would come before long—when it would be the case of "one man" and "one vote" there would not probably be 5,000 electors in the City, very likely not 2,000, because of the balance of 9,000 who were men most of them not being in a position that at present conferred the vote. Statements had been made that in a history of 550 years the City had always returned four Members; but that was not absolutely correct, there was a period when the City actually returned two Members. But to go back for 300 years, when Queen Elizabeth promulgated an Ordinance against the building of houses lest there should be too many people to serve God and honour the Queen, there were then three times the number of men who had votes for the City and had votes for no other place; now the men had votes for other places, and those who would preserve the same number of City Members must justify the duality of representation. The great depopulation had taken place almost entirely in the present century, and had arisen from two main causes—natural and artificial. The natural cause was the great increase in the value of City land, the much larger profit that accrued from the building of offices, and the consequent extradition or exilation of the inhabitant population. The other cause was artificial—first, the action taken by the Corporation in driving out the poorer population, which had had an enormous effect upon the poor rate in certain districts, and a serious effect upon 50,000 people to whom time was money; and, secondly, the cause was referred to in the City Census itself, the incidence of the Inhabited House Duty. The Corporation of the City itself—he would be corrected if he was wrong, but he generally took care to be correct in what he said about the Corporation—the Corporation, he believed, inserted clauses in their leases that houses should not be inhabited, and in consequence there were 5,000 houses within the City of London wherein, if the Inhabited House Duty did not exist, there would be a population of some 30,000, for many of them were extremely large buildings, in which hundreds of people were found during the day, and which had plenty of accommodation on the top floors, not lived in because of the incidence of the House Duty. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer were present this might be commended to his notice. It was a fact well known in the City, and to which the Report alluded, saying large sums would have to be paid on account of these buildings if they were inhabited. This had tended to reduce the population to 50,276; but the gentlemen who took part in the carrying out of this policy he now found pleading the facts brought about by their own action. But he was about to refer to the Census. It was proposed that the Census in the City should be taken under exceptional conditions, that it should be surrounded by all the authority that attached to a Census taken by order of the House, but that the Corporation should carry it out. But that the House would not agree to, and the only authoritative Census was the night Census giving the figures 50,276. For many reasons the day Census taken was unreliable. As an instance, he was in one Census himself counted four times. True, he had, as a City elector, four Representatives in the House; but that was no reason why he should be counted four times. That occurred not in the figures 261,000, but in the larger table setting out the number of those frequenting the City. He had apartments in the Temple, and it so happened that on the day in question he went in and out four times, and on the fourth occasion he noticed as he passed a man making an entry in a book. Then it occurred to him this man was assisting in compiling the figures for the Census, and speaking to the man the latter admitted he must have counted him four times. That was in respect to the figures bringing up

the 800,000 total, and which set out more cabs and vehicles than ever frequented the City of London in a day. Another figure was supposed to set out the number of occupiers, something over 261,000; but that was really not the number of occupiers. He should be very sorry to say anything of that kind unless he could support it with an authority the City would respect. He had their own Census, the very Return itself printed by the Corporation, among whom he had many valued friends, and who supplied him with such documents. According to the Return the figures 261,000 included reporters, compositors, printers, agents, messengers, porters, clerks, shopmen, cabmen, servants, errand boys, police, and shoe-blacks. It included shoe-blacks, these and police being set down at 3,348. The point he made was this—that though 261,000 was put forward as the figure representing occupiers, there were 44,000 adults and their families, and 21,000 children under 15 years of age. Now, another set of figures had reference to how many of these were employers of labour. One statement the City had sent round to Members—but which, as was the case with other statements, they did not think fit to send to him, though any unjust criticism or comment he might make upon it would recoil upon himself—in that statement it was set out that 51,000 were employers of labour—the number was rather over that as they made it out, but they admitted they made an average, as the actual number could not be ascertained; but even that was unreliable. To take an illustration from a community of which he had some considerable knowledge, there were set down as employers of labour 2,116 barristers. Now, there were not 600 sets of chambers in the City at all, and of the gentlemen of the Bar many a half-dozen had a boy between them Those figures in the Return were unreliable. There was as much justification in reckoning clerks, porters, and others who frequented the City as inhabitants, as there would be in counting the mill hands and others who went in from Salford and other places to Manchester every day among the Manchester population. If the principle were applied to the City it was equally applicable to other places. Then to turn to an entirely different argument. It had been stated that London had an exceptional number of electors—the number had never been actually stated, but sufficiently near—that this exceptional number ought to be taken into account. Well, he had endeavoured to point out that when the time came for the "one man, one vote" principle, the number of electors would be found extremely small, certainly under 5,000, probably under 2,000. Take the case of anyone who had a vote in the City for the four Representatives for whom he had adequate respect, for one of whom he had special respect—take anyone who had a vote for an office or chambers—he would leave his office each day for some other part of London or the suburbs, where he probably owned his house, was it to be expected that he would not vote in the district where he lived? His larger interest would be outside the City. In his own case, he (Mr. Firth) paid a considerable rent for chambers; but he had a much larger interest in his own house in which he lived, and that, he supposed, was the case with other people. He gave this as an illustration of what he apprehended would be the ultimate result. If plurality of voting were abolished the number of voters for the City would be small indeed. A third of the City electors, some 8,000, were members of City Livery Companies, and of those the vast majority did not come into the City at all except for one purpose, to dine. They had the turtle qualification. These Livery votes must sooner or later be abolished; a Commission had recommended it, and the recommendation would ultimately become law. He did not put it upon that ground, but because the system was inherently contrary to the spirit of the age in which they lived. Those votes were purchased. He had had himself the membership of eight City Companies offered to him for money, and any reasonably respectable man could purchase membership of a City Company—that was to say, purchase votes for the City of London, because the one followed the other; and if that were so, it was not a franchise that would long survive the advent of a Democratic Parliament. Now the proposition was that the City should be dealt with in a different manner from other constituencies because of its ancient history, its wealth, and because of its advantages

in many other respects; but he apprehended the proposition the Government had made was one that, however some might regret it, as regarded the loss of Members, would commend itself to the sense and judgment of the House of Commons. Indeed, personally, he should have preferred that the representation of the City should have been reduced to one, and that would have been a very equitable allowance on the basis of the Bill; but because he thought the proposal in the Bill was a fair and just compromise he supported it. It would gradually let the friends of the City down to what would ultimately be their level, while it recognized in full all that *prestige* of which the City supporters had made quite sufficient.

Mr. GORST said, he was, like the hon. and learned Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth), an humble City elector; but he represented rather the working class element, for he had a vote for the chambers where he endeavoured to earn an humble livelihood for himself and family. He did not belong, like his hon. and learned Friend, to the wealthy class—the great Merchant Princes associated with ideas of the City. Like his hon. and learned Friend he viewed these great ones at a respectful distance, his admiration for their grandeur being not altogether unmixed with a feeling of that envy of which the hon. and learned Member was the admitted exponent in the House. As far as he was going to trouble the Committee with a few remarks, he stood upon the bare central principle of justice—that the City of London should be treated in the same way as any other constituency having its exceptional character ought to be treated. He supposed that the hon. Member would admit that the City was entitled to some representation, the only difference of opinion being as to how many Members it was entitled to. Everybody knew that to look upon those who slept in the City as its population was absurd. If they adopted that artificial method of calculating the population of the City it was only entitled to one Member; but everybody knew that to call the population of the City of London 50,000 was an absurdity. It was true that only that number actually slept in the City; but they ought to take into consideration all the people who exercised their calling there and were there all day long. He had watched the conspiracy which had been going on in some quarters of the House against the population of the City over since the beginning of the present Parliament. He remembered the arrangements made for the Census of 1881, and the strong Party feeling shown by hon. Members opposite, and especially by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke), in their desire to secure a Census which would reduce the Census Return of the City to a minimum. He remembered the Corporation coming down with a most modest proposal—namely, that there should be taken by the Census authorities of the United Kingdom a day Census of the City of London, according to the principles that they might approve, and that all the expenses of this Return, which would have been most interesting, should be borne to the last shilling by the Corporation. But that proposal was scornfully rejected by that House, and he admired the effrontery of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Firth) and his associates when they now came down to the House and abused the Census that was taken because it was not quite as reliable as it might be. It was not as reliable as it might be because the President of the Local Government Government Board, the hon. Professor, and many others who wanted to reduce the Return as far as they could, gave the matter a factious opposition.

Mr. FIRTH said, he was sorry to interrupt the hon. and learned Gentleman; but, as a matter of personal explanation, he desired to say that he regretted he was not in the House at the time the division was taken on the question referred to, and he did not take part in it. Therefore he could not have offered a factious opposition.

Mr. GORST said, if the hon. and learned Gentleman was not there in the flesh he certainly was in the spirit. Whose fault was it that the Return was not so reliable as it might have been? It was the fault of those who prevented the arrangement which he had mentioned. The City of London was the most remarkable example at present in the country of a movement which was going on in every great town, and which the Legislature of the future would find

itself compelled to ratify. That was that in great towns people were ceasing to sleep and have their families and their domestic homes in the place where they carried on their business. And the City of London, although the most remarkable instance of this, was by no means the only one. In Liverpool, Manchester, and Leeds the practice was also beginning to be adopted, and the centres of those towns were inhabited at night by an exceedingly sparse population, which by no means represented the people who had their business there during the day. So it was in the City. Could it possibly be contended that the Gentlemen elected by the people who slept in the City would adequately represent the commercial interests of the City? If they wanted the first City in the world to be adequately represented they must allow the vote to those who carried on their business there, and who worked there throughout the day. He would tell his hon. and learned Friend who did not know the number of electors in the City that there were 26,636; and, according to all the principles of the Bill, 26,636 were entitled tomore than two Members. The City of Bristol, which, under this Bill, was allowed four Representatives, had almost identically the same number of electors. This was not a case of giving additional representation to the City. The City was not asking for additional Members, which the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to think, but was simply asking to retain the same number of Members they had had for the last 550 years. The City of London was only asking to be treated in the same manner as other large constituencies, but with the additional argument in its case that the number of electors it had entitled it to the number of Members it at present enjoyed. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chelsea had stated that, when duality of voting was done away with, the electors of the City would be only 2,000. He thought that was rather begging the question. Speaking for himself, he thought he should be inclined to exercise his franchise if he only had the right of voting once, not in the place where he had his house, where he had practically but few public interests, but in the place where his business was conducted; and where, although he had no domestic home there, all his public, all his mercantile, all his commercial interests were situated. The hon. and learned Member had expressed an opinion in regard to the City, and it might be true that the hon. and learned Member was right in anticipating the decadence of the City; but when that decadence took place it would be time enough to take away its representation. He did not know whether the Government made this a question of the existence of the Bill. He had made up his mind generally to vote in favour of all points in the Bill which were vital, on the ground that his Leaders had entered into a sort of arrangement with Her Majesty's Government, and he, for one, was prepared to do his best to carry out the arrangement; but if he was at liberty to give a vote for his hon. Friend the Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler), his sense of justice would compel him to go into the Lobby, and say that, according to all the principles of this Bill, the number of registered electors in the City of London was entitled to at least four Representatives.

Mr. GLADSTONE: In regard to the appeal which the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down has made to me, I can so far answer it as to say that, undoubtedly, this arrangement, we think, is one by which a very considerable indulgence has been given to the City of London. That is our opinion; and it was, undoubtedly, one of the points which formed the subject of communication before this Bill was introduced to the House that this community of 51,000 persons, according to the Census, should return two Members to this House. I need not go further than to say that it was so considered, and so disposed of, in order to give the hon. and learned Gentleman an indication as to the direction in which he should vote. It has been said that we have been actuated by pique in this matter. I can very well excuse the hon. Alderman who moved this Amendment, and those like him, who have been closely associated with the City for many years, and have held high office in it, for certain statements which they may make. But it is not so easy to excuse the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay), who has not been in the habit, I think, during his Parliamentary career, of becoming connected with great communities, but who, I believe, has rather been

remarkable for his wanderings among small ones. It is said by these hon. Gentlemen to be pique that has influenced us in this matter. In the first place, if it be pique that has led the Government to be parties to this arrangement, I think it cannot be pique that has led those with whom, however, that arrangement has been made to concur in it. I would also point out that if we were to be influenced adversely to the City of London by the fact that it returns a majority of two Members opposed to the Liberal Party, a thing which it has hardly ever done, except in the last few years, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman might well ask himself why pique did not lead us to a similar course in the case of the Universities, where we have never had a majority, where out of nine seats seven are held to be perfectly secured to the Conservative Party, and no Liberal seat can be regarded at best but as precarious, and where the whole mass of University Members may be considered as nearly forming an unbroken phalanx from generation to generation opposed to the principles of the Liberal Party. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman must see that the same motives of pique must have entered here. Our Bill rests on the basis of certain principles, and we should have had an easier argument against the present Amendment if we had applied those principles to the City of London with unflinching rigour. It is because we have deviated from those principles in favour of the City of London that we are now challenged by our opponents in this debate. If we have been actuated by pique, I suppose that it has been to bring some benefit to ourselves that we have made this reduction in the number of Representatives to be allotted to the City of London. But this change will not be beneficial to us. The balance of votes, supposing the balance of opinion to remain as it is now, will remain unchanged. At present the City returns three Tory Members against one Liberal Member, and, taking one from three, leaves a balance of two Members against the Liberal Party. Let us suppose that this Bill becomes an Act, and that the City returns two Members, there is little doubt that each voter being allowed two votes, two Tory Members will be returned, and a balance of two against the Liberal Party will remain undiminished. I must say I have been much struck with the course of this debate. If I understood the argument that has been used on the other side of the Committee, a great deal of it rests upon this principle—that the basis of this Bill is a bad basis, and that the Bill ought to be mainly constructed, not with a view to the representation of persons, but to the representation of property. That, indeed, appears to be the desire of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). He says there are 26,000 electors in the City of London, and complains that we only propose to give them two Members. But how came there to be 26,000 electors? The speech of the hon. and learned Member was a direct challenge to extreme politicians on this side of the House never to rest until they have established the principle of population, pure and simple. How came there to be 26,000 electors in the City of London? On account of the astonishing indulgence with which the City is treated in respect of the Livery votes. Is a constituency so made up entitled to be considered man for man as the constituency of other towns? The hon. and learned Member says we shall not find elsewhere a constituency of 26,000 voters with only two Members. But he is mistaken in this. Newcastle has 27,000 voters, all of whom, with the exception of a very limited number, are real men of flesh and blood, who live in Newcastle and nowhere else. It is a genuine representation of men who have a single vote each, and where the persons having a double vote form a perfectly insignificant proportion of the constituency. But in the City of London the persons having a double vote, and, in some cases, a treble and quadruple vote, are the general rule of the constituency; and when we are told that they ought to be considered as voters for the City of London rather than as voters elsewhere, that is an argument directly against the principle of the Bill, because it amounts to this—that commercial interests and property are the first things to be represented, and men are a secondary consideration. The hon. and learned Member complained of the night Census; but the night Census is the universal principle of the Bill, and the universal principle of the Bill is, forsooth, to be overturned because it operates unfavourably to the City of London. But it does

not, because those who form the day population of the City of London have their vote elsewhere. ["No, no!"] What does the hon. Gentleman say? [Mr. BARING: I say no! Sir. Well, I would suggest to the hon. Gentleman that it may lead to inconvenience if all of us express conflicting opinions at the same moment. Let us bear in mind the manner in which the principles of this Bill are applied to London and to other places. London is given this extraordinary advantage—first of all, it is favoured with a radius of 25 miles, instead of a radius of seven miles, as in all other great towns; and, secondly, it is allowed to form *ad libitum* a large proportion of its constituency of close and irresponsible Corporations. I must observe also that the Amendment is one that would involve a further increase in the numbers of this House. None of the hon. Gentlemen who have supported the Amendment have indicated where the additional Members are to be obtained from if London is to continue to have four Members. One hon. Gentleman said that Wales was over-represented. Are we to take Members from Wales, or from Ireland? These hon. Gentlemen have not considered that if the 12 counties of Wales, the national existence of which has not been recognized for the purposes of legislation for the advantage of Wales until within the last year or two, are now to be recognized for the purpose of inflicting a penalty on Wales, the Principality is not the district of the country with which they will have to begin. If Wales is to be deprived, because it is, as alleged, somewhat too highly represented—I do not now wish to enter into the case of Ireland—hon. Gentlemen opposite will have to begin with the South Western counties of England, which are more highly represented than Wales; and when they look about for additional Members to be given to the City of London, they will have, I am afraid, to be obtained by withdrawing some of those Members which, according to this Bill, are intended to be allotted to that portion of England. I will for a moment compare the City of London with the City of Liverpool. Some hon. Gentlemen appear to have rather a mean idea of Liverpool. I would observe that the City of Liverpool has been quite as remarkable a supporter of Conservative principles as the City of London. But hon. Gentlemen speak of Liverpool and other towns as if you only required to go a very short distance and you are out in the country. Hon. Gentlemen do not know the town. I am conversant with a district which is five miles from the Liverpool Exchange, and that district was exclusively held by villas until within the last six or ten years—so exclusively that I remember well in the ecclesiastical district the clergyman had not the means of distributing his alms, and he had to send them elsewhere in order to find people to receive them. That district is now being broken up for a dock population, and the former inhabitants are, of course, going out to greater distances. It is a great mistake to suppose that a radius of seven miles includes the whole population of Liverpool who transact their business in that place. No very small number of persons belonging to Liverpool actually live in Chester and the neighbourhood, and there is a continual tendency to further dispersion. I am sure that a much larger radius than that which has been mentioned will be required to include the whole of that population. But to that population we give no benefit whatever. We apply to it with the utmost rigour the principles of the Bill. Whereas in London a population of 51,000, by the Census, is to have two Representatives, in Liverpool, in the Exchange Division, a population of 72,000 persons, exactly analogous in its constant pursuits, is to have one Representative, the only difference being that in the Exchange Ward of Liverpool there are no Liverymen, and there is no advantage to be drawn from their living within a radius of 25 miles. To dwell on this figure of 51,000 is quite idle, because it is well known that the radius has an enormous effect in London in the multiple or double vote. We have done our best to maintain that double vote; but the pressure that is now made for so extreme a case as to allot four Members for the City of London makes it extremely difficult to expect that if such a demand is granted the double or property vote could for any length of time be maintained. If we grant this claim it is plain, in my opinion, that the granting of it would raise discontent in other large towns to a point such as would disturb the general structure of the Bill. I do not think

that the 72,000 in the Exchange Ward of Liverpool are particularly well satisfied now by having no regard paid to the situation of that population. ["Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen cheer, and I take that as virtually an expression of assent to my proposition that like demands would be advanced on behalf of populations in an analogous situation in other great towns. But, as I have said before, principles have been inverted for the convenience of argument. Another instance occurs to me. What is one of the arguments for this Amendment? It is that London, as a whole, is under-represented; and because London, as a whole, is under-represented, according to the provisions of this Bill, therefore the City of London is to be largely over-represented relatively to it numbers. If London is under-represented the proper remedy is to give more Members to London at large, and not more to the City of London, if the arrangement is to be a just and equitable one. Therefore, when I say this Motion is a Motion for the further increase of the number of Members of this House, I say it not only because there are two seats to be found which you will have great difficulty in finding, but also because I am satisfied that those other great communities would not rest satisfied with the arrangements of the Bill were we to recognize in the case of the City of London certain considerations, and then deny entirely to those other communities the benefit of such considerations. And it must be remembered that, great and extraordinary as has been the increase of London, the increase of some of these other communities has been more rapid still. In my boyhood the population of the town of Liverpool was certainly not more than one-twelfth part of the population of London. I am not sure that it was so many. But if the population of Liverpool were now to be counted in the Liverpool district on both sides of the river, in the same way as the Metropolitan district is counted, the population of Liverpool would be more than one-sixth part of that of London—and perhaps very considerably more. All these things must be taken into view. We have desired to recognize the primacy of London. We have done so by a deviation from the general principle of the Bill, in which, on the whole, I trust the Committee will be disposed to acquiesce. But we cannot afford to give that excessive recognition to the old arrangements of the City which might lead to a disturbance of the general provisions of the Bill. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) complained that we were inconsistent in refusing to give four Members to the City of London, while boroughs of small population were retaining their separate representation. I suppose he referred principally to boroughs of 15,000 and upwards. [Mr. GORST: Boroughs having two Members.] But why is that done? It has been done because in those cases where towns have constituted historical communities, with a distinct local and municipal life transmitted through many centuries, it has been thought wise to sanction that principle, and to allow that element of common life, as well as the element of population, to enter into the consideration. But I am sorry to say there is no case in which the element of common life is so little applicable as the case of the City of London; because, although you have a Municipality in the City of London, that Municipality is perfectly distinct and separate from all the greatest interests of the City of London. The great powers that are concentrated in the City of London, the vast knowledge, the vast command of commerce, the eminent men who have grown up in connection with its commerce, have constituted a class distinct and apart from the Municipality. The Municipality has had ample honours of its own; it has established a high and honourable place in the history of the country. Still, that is a character that does not in the slightest degree admit of its being compared with the other great communities, so far as regards union between the municipal institutions and the leading classes of the community such as you will find in Glasgow, Manchester, Birmingham, or elsewhere. If the hon. and learned Member will urge the argument that the City of London ought to have four Members, rather than that any town of under 50,000 inhabitants should have one, or that any town of upwards of 50,000 should have two, I can only say that if he applies that he will find it go very far—so far as to alter essentially the provisions of the

Bill. He will find that that principle will be ruthlessly applied in the case of the City to the double vote, and to the influence given by that double vote to property, and that the final result of the operation would be not that the City would benefit, but would fare worse than under the moderate arrangements of this Bill.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I have heard several times in the course of the discussion observations made by some of my hon. Friends on this side of the House as to the position in which we, who were parties to the arrangement before the Bill was introduced, now stand in reference to the question before us. I have heard several references to myself, which I cannot consider as very complimentary. At the same time I feel very well assured that if my hon. Friends will take the trouble to consider the arrangement, as a whole, they will form a somewhat more favourable opinion as to the merits of that which we agreed to with the Government. The speech of the Prime Minister has been one of so exhaustive a character, that it hardly leaves me much to say in the way of fresh argument. But I wish strongly to impress on my hon. Friends how very important it is to us to preserve many of those things in our Constitutional system which are preserved under this Bill, and which we are not at all sure would have been preserved in the face of a strong Radical majority, if it had not been for the agreement to which we came. I will take the point referred to by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham Mr. Gorst, and he put the point as clearly and powerfully as anyone I have heard speak. I observed that he and others said—"We consider the position of the electors of the City, and we find that those electors are many of them men who are deeply interested in the commercial and mercantile welfare of the country They do not spend their nights in the City; they spend their nights elsewhere; but they spend their days in the City, and their principal interest is not in the house in which they sleep, but in the house in which their business is conducted. Would you rather, under all the circumstances, give your vote in the constituency in which you happen to live, or in the constituency where you have your principal business to do?" Well, my answer is, I should like to give my vote in both, and under this Bill you will have the power to do so. Every man who has a vote for the City of London at the present time will continue to have a vote for the City of London; and if he has a vote elsewhere—in Surrey, or Brighton, or anywhere else in the country—and if he combines with his interest as a mercantile man some share in landed property, he will preserve the right to those votes, which, if you had simply the "one-man one-vote" system, he would lose. It seems to me that in that respect we have made an arrangement under which we have secured the retention of this important franchise—a right of voting which gives us so large a Conservative element, and of which, but for the agreement, we should have been deprived. The Prime Minister has used another argument which also occurred to me—that this is really not a question of a Party character, because what you may expect to do under the Bill is exactly what you do at present. At present you have got three Members on one side, and one on the other. There are now three Conservative Members, and I hope that will always be the balance of opinion in the City. But whether the majority be Conservative or Liberal, you would generally find, if the existing state of things were to continue, that there would be three on one side, and one on the other; and, as the one Member must be told off to balance one on the other side, the result would be that the majority would have an efficient balance of two. You will have exactly that now. Under this Bill, if the Conservatives are in a majority in the City they can secure both seats; but if you introduce four Members you raise the question of the minority vote—a system which will be applied to that constituency, and to no other. That of itself would be an inconvenience we ought not to subject ourselves to without some good reason. A point which has been strongly urged to-night, and which was urged upon us when we were considering this question before the Bill was prepared, was the position in which other great centres of commerce and industry would be placed. In none of them is there made this distinction which is made in the case of the City of London. Neither in Liverpool nor Birmingham, nor in any of the

seven constituencies that were enumerated by the President of the Local Government Board do you find any distinction made between the central district which answers to the position of the City of London and the other parts of those towns. You find that Liverpool, Birmingham, and the other places are divided into single-Member districts; and upon no other grounds than respect for the greatness and historical position of the City of London and its undoubted importance is an exception made in its case, which exception is in exactly the same proportion as the representation of the City of London now bears to the representation of some other large cities—that is, it has twice the number. It will still continue to have twice the number, and it will have that representation on account of the desire to preserve its primacy. Under these circumstances, it seems to me we should be acting unwisely if we were to jeopardize and break up the whole machinery of the Bill—unless you are dissatisfied with the machinery as a whole. [*Ironical cheering from the Conservative Benches.*] Some of my hon. Friends cheer that; but if you are dissatisfied with the machinery, the issue before us will be somewhat different. Undoubtedly, the effect of passing this particular proposition would be to make the retention of single-Member constituencies more difficult. It would make the whole scheme of the Bill unworkable, unless it were recast, and you were to find the seats you propose to add to the City. Remember, again, the great importance which has been given to the Metropolitan representation by the large increase in Metropolitan Members. The Metropolitan Representatives are raised from 22 to, I think, 59—not very far short of three times the present number. That is a large increase, and no doubt many of the new Members will represent the mercantile and business interests which you desire to see the City of London represent. It is no use attempting to add to what has been so well said by the Prime Minister. It does appear to me that his argument on the subject is a strong argument in itself, irrespective of considerations having reference to the arrangement that has been entered into. I should be quite prepared to support the Bill founded on those lines, and including this provision, even if I had not been concerned in any previous arrangement. When I take the whole arrangements of the Bill together, and see how one part hangs to another, it seems to me that we are making an exceedingly good arrangement.

SIR THOMAS CHAMBERS said, it was a remarkable thing that the proposal of the Bill to reduce the representation of the City of London by one-half was supported by the argument that what was left of its representation was still much more than was in accordance with the principles on which the Bill was framed. He did not mean to go into the general position of the City of London, in comparison with other towns, though he thought the speech of his right hon. Friend the Prime Minister rather implied that there ought to be some other alteration besides the one sought to be made by the Amendment. The one point to which he would invite the attention of the Committee was this —that the night Census arrangements were made purely for the convenience of enumeration, and did not touch any principle. The fundamental principle of the Bill was population; but it was no part of that principle that the population should be enumerated at midnight. Wherever in any town in England the mere question of the apparatus or machinery for taking the numbers interfered with the substantial principle of the Bill it ought to be discarded. There were a few towns and cities in England besides London where the night population was a most inadequate representation of the real population of the place. What was the argument to be derived from that fact? After the machinery of the Bill, wherever the question of machinery came in to interfere with the principle of the Bill and defeat its very object, which should give way? Was the substantial principle of the Bill to give way? Were they not to represent numbers because they took it into their heads that, for the convenience of counting, it was easier to count sleeping people than waking people? He thought the better plan was to save the principle of the Bill by sacrificing in individual instances the machinery for estimating the population. In every case where the mode they had chosen for the convenience of counting the population was a mode which defeated the object of the Bill,

they should vary it. In this particular instance they should allow another mode of enumeration. By that they would not interfere with the principle of the Bill; but, on the contrary, would more successfully carry it out, and secure a more truthful representation. What magic was there in counting people when they were asleep, especially if they were the nobodies in the district in which they slept? In Liverpool and other great towns, in proportion as they progressed and became more successful, the more would the people sleeping there be nobodies. Yet it was argued that the representation of those great cities, instead of being increased, ought to be diminished, because they had adopted a rule of enumeration which did not apply to all cases. He should have no fear of the result of this division if it were an open question. When, following the Prime Minister, the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition argued in favour of a Bill about which they were both agreed, and about which both the great Parties were agreed, he and those who advocated this Amendment stood in a very disadvantageous position. But he would simply ask the Committee to consider this question—would they let a subordinate rule as to machinery upset and defeat the very principle which was the foundation of this Bill?

MR. J. G. HUBBARD observed, that if the ideal intelligent foreigner so constantly appealed to were asked to put his finger on the most surprising feature of this Bill, he would assuredly place it on that clause which cut down to one-half the representation of the City of London. He might imagine they had reached the period which Macaulay prophesied when the New Zealander should stand on London Bridge and survey the ruins of the City of London; and he might suppose that, out of pure pity for its antecedent greatness, the Government of the day had condescended to give it an appearance of representation. But when he came to understand that the result was the result of a principle avowed and acted on through the whole of this Bill he would be more astonished. The principle of the Bill was based on population and a particular scheme of enumerating numbers. That principle was one which lay at the foundation of incipient society. It was the only rule which could be followed among uncivilized peoples. If a Zulu Chief were to call a meeting of his people, he would say—So many spearmen shall send so many Representatives. If the Mahdi were to convene a Parliament in Khartoum, he might require every 10,000 spearmen to send one Deputy. But in civilized countries they had long since passed over the idea that population was everything. Population was not everything. What, till the last year or two, had been the condition of their representation? It had depended, not on the growth of population, but on the growth of wealth and science. If it were to be said that the growth of wealth was a vulgar ingredient to introduce into such a subject, he should answer that wealth was what constituted the safety of this country. It was nothing but the wealth of this country that the country could rely on in all emergencies when it had to fight for its rights and liberties. In the City of London, beyond any other city in the world, these variety of interests were to be seen. Not only was the City of London the great centre of the trade and manufacture of the whole world, but it was the centre of the trade of their extensive Colonies. Beyond that even, it was the centre of all financial operations; and that was the pivot upon which, more or less, all the commerce of the world was practically transacted from one end of the year to the other. Then, again, he asked, independently of the interests which had to be represented, what were the duties of the Representatives of the City? They were not simple, and they were multifarious. They had not only to give their advice and assistance to the Government, but they were especially charged with the cares and interests of the constituency which sent them there, and it was their duty to see that the interests of the fund-holders were not affected by an adventurous Chancellor of the Exchequer. In a great crisis like the present, moreover, they were bound to act not only in reference to the interests of their immediate constituents, but with regard to the interests of the whole country. The Prime Minister and the President of the Local Government Board had both remarked upon one feature of the case, with regard to the electors of the City of London, that, as now consti-

tuted, they had double votes. But that was no compensation for reducing the number of their Representatives. If they had a dozen votes each that would not increase the number of Representatives in the City, and that was a grievance with regard to the diminution of the representation, not as to the treatment of the voters themselves. It was quite true that they might have special privileges as voters for places other than the City; but that did not affect the number of Members they were entitled to return for the City. Having regard to the importance of the City of London, not only population, but taxation also, ought to be taken into consideration. If they took the question of taxation they would come to this important result—that of the whole sum upon which Income Tax was paid under Schedule D, amounting to over £240,000,000 for the whole country, the City represented £38,000,000—that was to say, about one-sixth, or 16 per cent of the whole Income Tax levied. If property were to have its due weight in the representation of the country, the City, instead of four, would have 100 Representatives. They did not ask for quite so many as that; but they did ask that they might keep their own; and that, he maintained, was a perfectly reasonable demand. It was not the sleeping population that formed the real population of the City, but the waking and the working population. This was a question which touched not only the City of London, but it touched the whole world. All the world was interested in the City of London as the seat of commerce and the centre of finance. In the face of all England, in the face of all Europe, in the face of all the world, it was the greatest indignity they could offer, to lower the representation of the City from four to two Members. He regretted the words which had been used by his right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote); and, speaking at a time when he could have no interest in the matter except the interests of the country and the City itself, he maintained that the mischief and the insult inflicted upon them, if this proposal was carried, could not be compensated for by any clauses which the Bill contained. He would rather that the whole Bill went overboard than that it should be carried with this clause in it. He would close his remarks with the expression of his most intense grief at the position in which they had been placed by the arrangement entered into between the two Front Benches, and with the hope that hon. Members would be sufficiently independent to act in this matter quite apart from any instructions which they might have received, and that they would vote in accordance with what they believed to be best for the interests of the country at large.

Mr. Alderman LAWRENCE said, it appeared to him that the Committee had been placed in a very extraordinary position. He had thought that they were now considering the clauses of that Bill, and that it was really open to them to discuss them. He had had no idea that by any provisional arrangement between the Leaders on both sides of the House the House of Commons was to be manacled and fettered, and its deliberations turned into a kind of solemn farce. When it was first rumoured in the City that the number of its Representatives in that House was to be reduced from four to two the report was not believed. Even when it appeared in the Bill it was never for a moment supposed until they had just heard it from the Prime Minister and from the Leader of the Opposition, that by this agreement, covenant, or treaty, come to between the Leaders of the two great Parties, they were to endeavour to solve any difficulty in which they might find themselves involved in connection with that measure by taking away from the City of London one-half of its present representation. The supporters of the Amendment had been asked whether they had any scheme to propose by which the two other seats they sought to retain for the City could be provided; but he said that if, as he contended, injustice would be done by the Bill it was not their business, as the responsibility of devising the means of correcting this monstrous injustice devolved entirely upon the Government. The interests of the citizens certainly ought not to be sacrificed in consequence, or in fulfilment of an arrangement to which they were no parties. Many Reform Bills had been brought in before this one, but in none of them had it ever been suggested that the number of Members for the City should be reduced from four to

two; and if no agreement in this case had been arrived at between the Leaders of both Parties he believed that no such proposal as that contained in this Bill would ever have been made by the Government on their own responsibility, as they knew full well that hon. Gentlemen opposite would have strongly opposed the proposition, and that there would have been no probability of its becoming law. They had had a great many reasons advanced as to why this reduction in the representation of the City was to be made; but he desired to offer some arguments on the other side. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had that night exhibited a surprising want of knowledge when he had spoken of the City of London, which he had said was confined to certain limits. He had admitted that the City had an immense amount of trade; but he said the ships were down the river. The right hon Gentleman did not appear to know that the Thames itself, from the Nore to Staines, was actually under the control of a Body the greater portion of whom were appointed by the Municipality of London, combined with certain other authorities. The River Thames was really under the control of the City of London. There was no city in the Empire, and there was no city in the world, that could be compared to the City of London. The hon. and learned Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth), who had an imagination which never lost an opportunity of displaying itself, told them that the City of London was losing its population, and implied that it was diminishing in importance, the fact being that whilst the sleeping population was less the active working day population was rapidly increasing. The City of London was not only the centre of the commerce and finance of the United Kingdom and its Colonies, but it was also that of the whole world, and contained within its boundaries numerous Markets, as the Money Market, the Stock Exchange, the Royal Exchange, the Bank of England, the great Import Market in Mincing Lane, the Corn Market, the Coal Exchange, the Book and Newspaper Markets, the Wool and Dry Goods Markets, and the immense Provision Markets, most of the Insurance Offices, all the London Joint Stock Banks and Branches or Agencies of every Bank and Banker throughout the United Kingdom. There was no combination of varied interests such as was found in the City in any other place in the world. It was, in fact, the combination of these varied interests which gave the City its peculiar character. Liverpool had a large amount of shipping, but London had gone ahead and far exceeded it; and he believed this was mainly owing to the changed current of commerce caused by the completion of the Suez Canal. London was the centre, and held the control and direction of nearly all the shipping of the world. He was not finding fault with cities elsewhere; all he said was, that the City of London had no rival. It was true it had been decreasing in regard to its sleeping population; but he could explain the reason of that. For instance, there was a Bill before Parliament to provide sites for the enlargement of the Post Office and the Post Office Savings Bank. The people who were living and sleeping in the houses would be dispersed in order to make way for these extensions. There were 18 or 19 Railway Stations in the City of London. Was there any other city in the Kingdom where there was such a large number? In order to obtain sites for the Railway Stations houses had to be removed, and those who slept in them had to sleep outside the City. Then, again, in connection with the completion of the Inner Circle Railway, and the consequent improvement of the streets, a large number of houses had been removed, and the population cleared away. As a matter of fact, the houses of the City of London during late years had been raised to such a height that he believed the present City was equivalent to three or four of the old cities piled one on top of the other. He was surprised at the argument which had been used by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. It seemed to him that the bargain between the Party Leaders had been made in reference only to the nature of the votes. It was a case of agreeing to divide the votes like in olden times, when there were a number of Election Petitions presented at the commencement of a new Parliament. The two Party Whips threw a Petition against a Petition across the Table to each other, until there were only four or five left, and then they would fight those out. In this case it was no

question of having a majority of two votes on either side of the House, or simply two on one side and none on the other; for, as he had already pointed out, what they wanted was such a number of Members as would adequately represent the varied interests which were involved in the City of London. There was no question at all as to whether the City Members were Tory or Liberal; for, to whatever Party they belonged, they felt themselves bound to do their duty to their constituents in furthering their commercial interests in every shape and form. Hon. Members who represented counties knew nothing whatever in regard to the duties of a Member of Parliament for the City of London. The Representatives of the City of London from 1832 downwards had been merchants, bankers, and members of the commercial classes. They had never found that the City of London had selected a Lord. [An hon. MEMBER: Lord John Russell.] Except in the case of Lord John Russell, when he was Prime Minister. The City had never elected a Colonel, an Admiral, or a Lawyer, and, least of all, it had never elected a Professor. The City of London wanted men who understood its commercial interests. It would be to the citizens a matter of deep regret that the two Parties had found it necessary, in order to carry out their arrangement, to sacrifice them. It was a singular thing that throughout this debate there was only one Member on that—the Government—side of the House found to support this proposal, and that was the hon. and learned Member for Chelsea (Mr. Firth). That hon. and learned Member had stated that this was a generous arrangement, because, according to the sleeping population on a Sunday night, the City was only entitled to one Member; but why had not the Government limited the representation of the City to one Member, as that would have been logically correct according to their theory of population? Because they found themselves landed in a *reductio ad absurdum*. They had taken away two Members, and now they wanted to be considered generous for not taking away three. The electors of the City wished to know where they could find their Representatives in the City, and it had rarely been the case that, during the last 50 years, they had been unable to find them in the City when they were wanted. Apart from these considerations, and viewing the question as a whole, it having been admitted that the City was placed in an exceptional position and ought to be treated in an exceptional manner, the subject of the sleeping population ought not to have entered into the question. He considered that this was simply a discussion upon an Amendment from which no result could be obtained, because the whole matter had been settled behind their back some time ago by the Government and the Opposition.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD expressed his profound regret that he was unable to take any real part in this debate. He had put an Amendment on the Paper to the same effect as that of the hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler); but he desired to explain that he had done so in complete ignorance that it was part of the bargain which the Prime Minister had confirmed that evening, and that it would be inconsistent with the preservation of that bargain that the Members of the Front Opposition Bench, at all events, should vote for the Amendment. Therefore, he could take no part in this discussion; and he wished to say distinctly that he considered a bargain ought to be kept in its spirit as well as in its letter. He wished to explain this, because his name appeared on the Paper to a similar Amendment to that at present before the Committee; but it was put there in complete ignorance of the spirit of the bargain. He, at all events, hoped to keep any bargain made on his behalf in the spirit as well as in the letter.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 162; Noes 117: Majority 45.—(Div. List, No. 53.)

MR. ACLAND, who had given Notice that he would move to insert the words "and University" after the word "borough," in page 2, line 8, explained that the object aimed at had been to put all the Universities in Great Britain and Ireland on the same footing, but that as it might be possible to deal separately in another Bill with this subject, and as the subject was so thoroughly discussed a few nights ago, he had no desire to re-open it, and therefore he should not propose his Amendment.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Boroughs to have additional Members).

Clause 6 (New boroughs).

Clause 7 (Boroughs with their boundaries altered).

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY moved the omission of the 2nd sub-section from page 2, line 29, which dealt with the four boroughs—Bristol, Exeter, Norwich, and Nottingham—which formed counties of themselves, and the freeholders in which were entitled to vote, as such, for the borough, with the view of inserting the following sub-section in its place:—

"(2.) From and after this present Parliament the several divisions of counties named in the first column of the Schedule to this Act shall respectively include, for the purpose of Parliamentary Elections, the several boroughs or parts of boroughs respectively named in conjunction therewith in the second column of the said Schedule, and freeholders, as such, shall cease to vote for the Election of Members for the said boroughs."

The hon. Gentleman said his Amendment referred to four boroughs which were counties in themselves. Before the passage of the Reform Act of 1832 there were 19 boroughs in the same position; but by that Act 13 of those 19 boroughs were merged in the surrounding counties, for the purposes of Parliamentary election. He had tried to discover why only 13 of the 19 were so treated in the Reform Act of 1832; but he had failed to find in the Parliamentary debates of the time any reason for it. At all events, 13 were merged in the counties, and it was provided that from that time the freeholders of these 13 boroughs should vote in the counties. The present Bill as it now stood dealt with two of the remaining six boroughs, and treated those two in the same way that the Act of 1832 treated the 13 that were merged in the counties; and the object of the Amendment which he now proposed was to treat the remaining four boroughs in the same manner. He could best explain the position of the freeholders in these four boroughs—Bristol, Exeter, Norwich, and Nottingham—by comparing the position of affairs in two such boroughs, say, as Nottingham and Derby. If a manufacturer or other resident in Derby was the owner of freehold property and also resided in the borough, he was entitled to vote for the borough on a residential qualification, and he also had a vote for the county through his property qualification. But in Nottingham a man situated in the same position did not get a vote for the county. His (Mr. Morley's) proposal was to assimilate the practice of the four towns he had mentioned to the practice which prevailed in every other town throughout the United Kingdom. The first ground for this proposition was that an anomaly of this kind, affecting only four boroughs in the United Kingdom, should be removed; but he admitted that the opinion of the inhabitants of the four boroughs themselves was entitled to very considerable weight, and so far as he was aware there was no strong feeling in these four boroughs for the change he proposed. But he thought there was another reason of greater weight which deserved considerable attention at the hands of the Government, and that was that the Bill as it now stood had a disfranchising effect. The Committee were probably aware that in the two cases of Nottingham and Bristol a considerable area was included in the Parliamentary borough from what, up to the present time, had been within the county, and in which the freeholder had had a right to vote for the county. The effect of including that area within the Parliamentary borough for the future would be, to a certain extent, to disfranchise certain freehold voters who up to the present time, had had a vote for the county. It might be said that they could vote for the borough instead of for the county; but the right of a freeholder to vote for the borough was limited by restriction of residence within seven miles, so there would, to a certain extent, be some measure of disfranchisement, though no doubt it would not be large. The Amendment which he had the honour to move was in no sense one hostile to the principle of the Bill, because, on many of the Amendments which had been moved both to this and to the Franchise Bill, the Government had used arguments which had been of very great weight, but which had been mainly based on the desire which had governed the framing of both those measures not to bring about any disfranchisement of any sort or kind. He was therefore entitled to ask that the

careful consideration of the Government should be given to the Amendment he proposed. It might be said that this Amendment was one which should have been proposed rather upon the Franchise Bill than upon the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill; but he would say with regard to that that the 7th clause of the present measure—the clause to which his Amendment applied—did in effect create a change in that very respect, because it added to the areas of the boroughs as they stood, making a change in the very opposite direction to that which the present Amendment proposed to bring about. The Bill proposed to add to the boroughs, and therefore not only to disfranchise, but also to enfranchise, in another way; and his proposal was that instead of adding to an anomaly which at present existed by increasing the area, they should do away with it altogether by throwing the area of the four boroughs, so far as freeholders were concerned, into the counties, and giving the freeholders a right to vote for the counties. He moved the Amendment in order to hear what arguments the Government might use. The matter was one which, at all events, deserved the consideration of the Government.

THE CHAIRMAN: How does the hon. Member propose to fill up the blank in his Amendment before the word "Schedule"?

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY: It should be "the ninth Schedule."

THE CHAIRMAN: Then the hon. Member proposes a new Schedule?

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY: Yes; a new Schedule. It is an Amendment to the existing clause; but, of course, it introduces a new Schedule which would have to be moved subsequently, if my present Amendment were adopted.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 29, to leave out sub-section (2), and add "(2.) From and after this present Parliament the several divisions of counties named in the first column of the ninth Schedule to this Act shall respectively include, for the purpose of Parliamentary Elections, the several boroughs or parts of boroughs respectively named in conjunction therewith in the second column of the said Schedule, and freeholders, as such, shall cease to vote for the Election of Members for the said boroughs."—(*Mr. Arnold Morley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I suppose, Sir, that this Amendment is in Order, as you called upon my hon. Friend to propose it; but I should have thought that it was not in Order. It is true that a certain section of this Bill deals with area; but this Amendment is really a disfranchising Amendment, and it is a matter which should have been dealt with, not in the present measure, but in the Franchise Bill. I understood my hon. Friend himself to say that that is so. We are not answerable for the legislation of 1832. If we had to justify it, probably we could not do so in all particulars. But we found that the ownership vote was maintained in these six constituencies; and in the Franchise Bill we determined what we should do with certain franchises—as, for instance, the freehold franchise. In order to retain as much as we could, we retained the freehold vote in these boroughs, and agreed not to disturb the existing right of the freeholders to vote in them. It was not our legislation; but we wished to disturb existing rights and privileges as little as possible, especially where they related to the ownership of property. This is a disfranchising Amendment which we did not introduce into the Franchise Bill, and we cannot accept it. Our objection was mentioned when we were discussing the Franchise Bill; and if we took any other course, we should be re-opening now, in the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill, what was settled and accepted by both sides of the House before. Of course, we could have tried to get rid of the ownership vote; but as we did not try to get rid of it in the Franchise Bill, we ought not to endeavour to get rid of it in the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill.

MR. LEWIS FRY, as representing the largest of the four boroughs affected by the Amendment, wished to point out that his constituents were quite satisfied with the present state of things, which had existed for many centuries. His hon. Friend had argued that the present state of things was an anomaly; but that was scarcely a very cogent argument, unless the hon. Gentleman was prepared to abolish the existence of these boroughs as counties. He (Mr. Fry) was opposed to the Amendment, because it would increase the area of the dual

or plural vote, and he believed that that would not be in accordance with the general feeling of the House. He was glad to hear that the Government were not able to accept the Amendment.

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY said, that, under the circumstances, he would withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. LEWIS moved that Progress be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Lewis.*)

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE thought it was an unusually early hour (12 o'clock) to move that Progress should be reported, and he suggested that the Committee should go on further.

MR. E. STANHOPE suggested that, at any rate, they should not take the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), as that raised a very large question, and a great number of Members, he understood, desired to take part in the discussion upon it.

MR. GORST said, it was necessary that they should get as early as possible to the Report of Supply. The Supply Votes which were to be reported that night were only passed at 4 o'clock in the morning; and when the Government were obliged to force Supply through at that rapid rate, it was only right that they should give some time for the consideration of the Report.

MR. GLADSTONE said, the Government were so entirely satisfied with the spirit in which the debate had been conducted, and thought the request, under the circumstances, for an early consideration of the Report of Supply was so reasonable, that they would assent to the Motion to report Progress after the clause now under discussion had been agreed to.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS thought the course suggested by the right hon. Gentleman was a most reasonable one.

MR. LEWIS said, his only reason for moving to report Progress was that he understood it to be the wish of the House to get to the Report of Supply.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, there was no reason to believe that the next Amendment on the Paper would take up much time

MR. HEALY said, he hoped the Government were not disposed to yield everything in this matter. When the Supply Votes were taken at 4 o'clock this morning there were only three Members of the Opposition present—the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), a noble Lord, and the hon. Member for the City of London (Mr. R. N. Fowler). Where were the rest of the Opposition, then? Why, they were at home, in their beds. They now proposed, at 12 o'clock, to move that Progress be reported simply for their own amusement, in order that they might have the pleasure of talking about General Gordon, who was dead and gone. Did the Opposition give the Irish Members any assistance last night? No; the Irish Party had to fight the Government alone and unaided. The fact was that the Tory Party wished to thrust this money Vote for Gordon's relatives down the throats of the Government.

MR. LEWIS said, he had no objection to the withdrawal of his Motion to report Progress.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. HEALY moved, in page 2, at end, add—

"Provided, That no right of freeman franchise shall be acquired or acquirable by any resident in any part of the new area so added."

He said his proposal was one of a very slight character; and, so far as Ireland was concerned, it would not affect that country at all. But the freeman franchise was peculiar and undefined; and his notion was that if the present borough area, with the right of freeman franchise contained within it, were extended to the two-mile radius, there would be new rights springing up within that two-mile radius which did not exist there before. If there was the right of freeman franchise within the mile radius, he thought it should not be extended, by reason of the extension of the borough limits, to the two-mile radius. Perhaps he should be met by the statement that all rights of freeman franchise were heritable, and descended by birth. But, in his judgment, that was not so; and there was at least one borough in Ireland where a man could acquire the freeman franchise by serving in a particular trade. His view was that there were certain boroughs in Ire-

land and in England where the freeman franchise was obtainable by residence and by the practice of certain trades; and it was indefensible that the area of such an indefensible franchise should be extended outside its present limits. If the borough of Galway had its boundaries extended by this Bill for 100 yards, or half-a-mile, or half-a-dozen miles, it would be an unfair thing to give an extended right of freeman franchise within the new area. He did not care whether the Government accepted his Amendment or not; he had only put it down because he thought it was a fair thing to do. He should be happy to withdraw it if it did not meet their views.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, at end, add "Provided, That no right of freeman franchise shall be acquired or acquirable by any resident in any part of the new area so added."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): We quite sympathize with the desire of the hon. Member not to encourage the extension of these old privileges; but, so far as the freemen are concerned, I must say that the Amendment is not wanted, and that it would have no effect at all. In England you have a certain number of freemen existing by virtue of birth. Although you may extend the boundaries of a borough, you cannot extend the number of people who have been born, or who will be born, freemen. Only those people who got the freeman franchise by descent would have it. The hon. and learned Member puts another case, with which I am not so familiar, where persons acquire rights by exercising particular trades. I will only say that we will consider that point, and see whether it is necessary to deal with it in any way. At the present moment, I must confess that I do not see how we could deal with it. If it is good for one part of a borough, I do not see why it should not be good for the rest. It would be impossible to say that a person on one side of a street should, by following a particular trade, become a freeman, while another person on the other side of the street, under the same circumstances, should not become a freeman. All I can say is that we will consider the matter.

MR. HEALY said, he desired to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Tuesday* next.

ELECTIONS IN COUNTIES (HOURS OF POLL) BILL.—[BILL 85.]

(*Mr. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Grey, Mr. Stafford Howard, Mr. Cochran-Patrick.*)

CONSIDERATION. THIRD READING.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

MR. WARTON moved the insertion of the following clause:—

(Amendment of Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, 1883.)

"Part II. of the First Schedule of 'The Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, 1883,' shall be read and construed as if the words following were not contained therein, viz. 'not exceeding the amount authorised by the Act of the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth years of Victoria, chapter 84.'"

The hon. and learned Gentleman observed that Parliament was now about to extend the hours of polling; and the effect of such extension would be, of course, to throw extra expenses upon those who had to go through Parliamentary Elections. That being the case, he would invite the House to consider what was the position in which hon. Members or candidates would be placed under the provisions of the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act. It would be found that they would run a very great risk of losing their seats by reason of exceeding the maximum expense allowed by law. There would be found in the Schedules of the Act what appeared to be a thorough inconsistency. As the Act passed through Committee it was consistent enough; but on Report an Amendment was introduced which was adopted without consideration, and without proper attention being called to its effect. In the second part of the first Schedule to the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, under the head of legal expenses, were the words "sums paid to the Returning Officer for his charges." He stopped there for a moment, because those were the words of the Schedule as the Bill passed

through Committee; and in accordance with those words the Schedule contained an account of the expenses payable by the candidate to the Returning Officer for his charges at the election. But the effect of the introduction of those words which he now asked the House to strike out would put the candidate into this position—that he was exposed to the danger of the Returning Officer asking for more than he was entitled to give; and the Returning Officer, if not paid, might refuse to act. The candidate might very innocently pay a little more than was quite right; for anyone who looked at the first Schedule of the Act 38 & 39 *Vict.*, c. 84, would find that there were 30 or 40 items, all of which were to be charged for. It would be easy, then, for the Returning Officer, by accident or design, to make a miscalculation of the items to be charged. For instance, the scale of charge for a clerk was one guinea. But the Returning Officer might say—"That was all very well when the poll was only open for eight hours; but now that the hours have been extended I cannot get a clerk to do the work for that money." The candidate, therefore, would be no longer free from the danger, when paying what was demanded by the Returning Officer, of paying 1s more than the expenses which were allowed by law; and if he did he would lose his seat for exceeding the maximum. Such a thing would be most unjust, and he (Mr. Warton) therefore preferred the insertion of this new clause, which would remedy the defect or evil that he had pointed out.

New Clause (Amendment of Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, 1883.)—(*Mr. Warton.*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I must say that I have heard with a great deal of satisfaction the speech in which the hon. and learned Gentleman has just proposed this clause. I remember the circumstances under which the Amendment to the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act of which he complains was made. I endeavoured at the time to point out that it was scarcely fair to the candidates or to the Returning Officers; but a majority of the House voted for it, and it was inserted in the Bill. Under these circumstances, therefore, I am able to regard with very much satisfaction the views which the hon and learned Gentleman has now expressed. As to the proposition now before the House, I may point out to the hon. and learned Gentleman that it is not really germane to the measure which is now under discussion; but we have undertaken to introduce a Bill in relation to Returning Officers' expenses, and we have so framed the title of that Bill that it will be open to the hon. and learned Member to propose his Amendment during the progress of that Bill. This Amendment will have a much more direct relation to that Bill than it has to this, and it will give an opportunity for discussing the question and allowing the House to decide whether it will or will not do as the hon. and learned Gentleman suggests.

MR. HEALY expressed a hope that the Government would not assent to any proposal for increasing the expenses of Returning Officers at Parliamentary Elections. It appeared to him that the subject might be germane to the 8th clause of the present Bill, because that clause dealt with points in connection with the expenses of Returning Officers, inasmuch as it provided that at a General Election the polls for all the divisions of a divided borough should be taken on the same day. He would like to know whether the Returning Officer was to get as much out of each of the unfortunate candidates for a constituency with four seats, as he did out of each of the candidates for a constituency with only two seats? If the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) would move his Amendment upon the next clause it would be germane to the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill; and he (Mr. Healy) hoped the Government would not agree to anything which proposed to increase those expenses, for the inclination of the Irish Party was to see such expenses cut down to the utmost possible limit, as they were, at the present time, unfair and extortionate.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I forget what were the exact circumstances under which the Amendment to the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, which it is now sought to upset, was passed; but I un-

derstand the Government to give an undertaking that they will meet the difficulty.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: No; we only undertake to insure that an opportunity shall be given for the submission of such an Amendment as this.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): All we undertake is to bring in a Bill in which it will be germane to deal with this question. We promise that my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) shall have ample opportunity to raise the question.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I quite understand. But then comes a question which I think is rather serious. We do not know what are to be the provisions of the Bill which is to be introduced. Now, my impression is that the expenses of the Returning Officer are quite high enough as they are, and they are upon a great scale. It is quite true that the Sheriff or Returning Officer under the new arrangements will have to incur more expenses; but then he will be able to charge upon the old scale. I do not know why the scale should be raised, and if the Bill which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General proposes to introduce is to raise the scale of the Returning Officers' charges.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I did not say so.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: Well, I do not know whether it is to do so or not, because the Attorney General has not told us what is to be the scope of his measure. But if it does, I am sure it will have no chance of being read a second time.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: We are in the rather awkward position of arguing this matter on a Bill which is not before us. It is obviously entirely out of Order to discuss it now. But all we undertake is to give the assurance for which the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Warton) asked last night, that there will, for certain, be a Bill to which this clause will be fairly and closely germane.

MR. GORST said, he did not wish to discuss the matter now, as another opportunity was to be given for raising the question; but he regretted that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) should have got rid of those admirable principles which he espoused two years ago.

MR. WARTON: I beg your pardon.

MR. GORST said, that the object of the Amendment to the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act of 1883 was not to deal with the question of scale, but to protect candidates at Parliamentary Elections from having expenses in addition to the scale imposed upon them by the Returning Officer. Although the candidate was legally responsible, he was perfectly helpless in the hands of the Returning Officer, and would have no chance of being returned otherwise.

Question put, and *negatived.*

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: No Amendments having been made, I ask that, by leave of the House, the Bill may be read a third time.

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [12th March] *reported.*

Resolution 1 *agreed to.*

(2.) "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £14,750, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Expenses of Her Majesty's Embassies and Missions Abroad."

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, that under this heading there was an item of £1,680 for the Afghan Boundary Commission. He did not propose to go into the question of that Commission now; but a very remarkable statement had been made in the House that evening, and he thought the House and the country would look for further information from the Government on the subject. Those who sat on the Opposition side of the House had refrained from pressing the Government for information, as they had been told that it would be contrary to the public interests to produce any. But they had refrained for this reason and upon this condition. They understood that Her Majesty's Government had insisted upon, and were endeavouring to do their best to obtain, the withdrawal of the Russian Forces from certain positions which they had occupied upon Afghan territory. So long as they understood that Her Majesty's Government were determined to maintain the integrity of Afghanistan,

and to uphold the pledges which they and the Government of Russia had given to that county, so long were the Opposition content to sit in silence and wait until Her Majesty's Government were disposed to give them information. But from the statement which had been made by the Prime Minister that evening, it appeared that there had been a new departure—a recognition that the Afghan troops had made some advances forward upon their own territory—["Oh, oh!"]—well, upon "debateable or debated ground," which the whole country understood to be Afghan territory, and that those advances, recognized as made upon "debateable or debated ground," were put upon the same footing as the Russian advances upon Afghan territory. That was very much the same as the old complaint against the lamb for aggressions upon the wolf. He wanted to know what was the position in regard to certain points. Was the agreement, of which the Prime Minister had spoken as affecting the Afghan territory, a new one or not? If it was a new one, he wished to know the date of it; and he also wished to know whether there had been any advances upon Afghan territory—any further advances—on the part of the Russian troops since that agreement was made? One point which he wished to impress most earnestly upon Her Majesty's Government was the deplorable effect upon the Afghans themselves—upon the Afghan Government and people—of any signs of weakness on the part of Her Majesty's Ministers. It was now 12 years since the former Ameer of Afghanistan was driven into the arms of Russia by an act of weakness similar to that which it was suspected Her Majesty's Government were now committing, though he hoped those suspicions might prove to be unfounded. The Ameer of Afghanistan in 1873 was driven into a Russian alliance by the refusal of the present Prime Minister and of the then Indian Secretary to give the support the Ameer asked for. That refusal rendered the late Afghan War inevitable, and, it might almost be said, necessary. A similar weakness now would drive the Ameer of Afghanistan and the Afghan people again into the arms of Russia, and the fate of India would thus be placed in the hands of their enemy for use against England whenever she might be in a most critical position. Without saying anything in the nature of aggravation as to the action of Russia at this moment, though that action was certainly most aggravating to them, he would impress upon Her Majesty's Government the terrible danger in which they would place their Indian Empire and their vast Imperial interests if they showed the slightest weakness or hesitation about supporting the Ameer and people of Afghanistan. He wished to make this protest, and to ask for some further explanation of this new agreement, and of the statement that there was some arrangement on foot between the two Powers as to the settlement of the boundary of the territory in question. He trusted that Her Majesty's Government would be able to see their way to give the House some further information on this important subject.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I should like to ask one or two questions on this subject. We understood the Prime Minister to make an appeal to the House the other night, and to suggest that in the present critical state of affairs we should not put any questions to the Government as to matters of policy. But he said he was willing to answer any questions relating to matters of fact. Now, upon matters of fact, we want to know what is the date of this alleged verbal agreement? That is a pure question of fact which cannot affect policy. We have a right to ask that question, and to have an answer to it, under the express promise of the Prime Minister himself. Next, we wish to know whether any advance has been made by the Russian troops since that agreement was determined upon, whenever that might have been? That also is a pure question of fact, and not of policy. Then we want to know whether this verbal agreement—and this is another question of fact, and nothing else—recognizes in any way, or shape, or form whatever the present position of the Russian and Anglo-Afghan troops—that is to say, does it assent in any way to the position which the Russians now hold against our protest and against the promises which the Russians themselves have always given us that they did not mean to go forward? These are all pure questions of fact which we have a right to have an answer to. The country—

the noble Lord (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) may not be so well aware of it as we are—is becoming very anxious about this matter. People have got a notion—and whether rightly or wrongly, it is necessary that it should be cleared up—that by this supposed verbal agreement something has been conceded to the Russians by the present Government as to the position of the troops. If that is not the case, it is just as well that that notion which has got abroad should be altogether disposed of; and, therefore, I venture to ask these questions—namely, what was the date of the alleged verbal agreement; has any advance been made by the Russian troops since that agreement was made; and does that agreement recognize the present position to which the Russians have advanced?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had alluded to a statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister earlier in the evening with regard to a distinction between statements of policy and statements of fact, and taking advantage of that distinction, he had, at that late hour of the night (12.30), put to him (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) a long string of questions. [Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: Only three.] Now, it had very often been stated by the Prime Minister, and by other Members of the Government, that whenever questions were put in regard to policy or fact, it was desirable that Notice should be given. It was only fair that he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) should ask the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross), if he desired information upon questions of fact in relation to such a very delicate and important matter as this, to take the usual course, and place his Questions upon the Notice Paper for Monday next.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, it was understood when they were discussing the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was remaining in his place for the express purpose of discussing this question on the Report of Supply.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE said, he was perfectly unacquainted with any such arrangement, although it was true he was not in the House at the time the right hon. Gentleman spoke of. He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) was speaking, however, in the presence of several Cabinet Ministers, and he believed he would be borne out when he said that they were not aware of any such understanding. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that the Government was unaware of the great importance and interest which attached to this subject in the country. As a matter of fact, the Government were fully alive to the great importance which was attached to this subject, not only in this country, but in all foreign countries. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had repeatedly pointed out to the House the great danger of plunging, either at Question time or on occasions such as this, into discussions upon matters in regard to which every single word that was said in the House was carefully noted and weighed, not merely in England, but everywhere abroad. He (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), therefore, hoped that the right hon. Gentleman, and also the hon. Gentleman the Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), would not in any way think him discourteous if he refused to be drawn, at that hour of the night, into a discussion upon this subject. All he could say was that the statement made earlier in the evening by the Prime Minister was made by the right hon. Gentleman with all the authority that attached to his high position; and he (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) felt that he could not, even if the occasion were opportune, contribute anything whatever to the elucidation of the question. Certainly, at that hour of the night, he ought not to attempt to make what, in all probability, would be an imperfect addition or extension of the statement which the Prime Minister made at Question time, knowing, as hon. Gentlemen did full well, the importance which attached to every word which fell from any Minister of the Crown upon important questions of this kind.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he thought that the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), if he did not choose to answer questions which he ought to be able to answer, might have abstained from reading a lecture to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) and other hon. Members of the House. It appeared

that the noble Lord was not in a position to defend his Estimates—that, in fact, he knew nothing about them. Earlier in the evening the Prime Minister volunteered a statement to the House. It was not a statement in answer to any question asked by hon. Members on the Opposition Benches, but it was a statement in answer to a question upon a totally different matter, put to him by one of his own supporters. The right hon. Gentleman, in a very careful manner, volunteered a certain amount of information, which seemed, on reflection, to be merely throwing dust into their eyes. The Prime Minister told them that an agreement had recently been made with Russia. He entered, to a certain extent, into the details of that agreement; but he never told the House what the agreement actually was, and he avoided informing the House what was the date of the agreement. Now, the date of the agreement was of paramount importance. They knew that there had been differences and divergencies since the old agreement was made; but if an agreement of a peaceful character had been come to within the last few days—if the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, or any other Member of the Government, would inform them that a peaceful agreement had been arrived at within the last few days—the alarm of the country would be greatly allayed, because the people would know that, at any rate, a kind of truce had been arranged for a short time. He appealed to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) to re-assure the House on the subject, if it was in his power to do so. The noble Marquess was really the only Member of the Government who gave the House frank and straightforward answers, and he (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) appealed to the noble Marquess to tell them whether the agreement alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was an agreement recently entered into—entered into within the last two or three days—or whether it was an old agreement on which they were to rely? He thought that hon. Members were entitled to an explanation on this subject; and he trusted the noble Marquess would not shelter himself under the peculiar plea that had been put forward, evidently to a certain extent in ignorance, by the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL desired to express, in a few words, the sincere pleasure with which he heard the observations which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister made earlier in the evening. It seemed to him (Sir George Campbell) that the right hon. Gentleman's words were as plain as they could possibly be; for he had distinctly said that an agreement had been made that neither party should advance until something further was settled. That seemed to him (Sir George Campbell) to be of the nature of what the hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had called a truce, and he (Sir George Campbell) was very glad to hear it, because it gave time for reflection. He did not intend to justify the actions of the Russians. He thought their conduct was as bad as it could possibly be; but, after all, it was well that they should not rush into war. In his opinion, the arrangement which was hinted at by the Prime Minister was the best that could possibly be made, because, if the agreement was fulfilled, and neither party wished for war, they could not have war. It was impossible to imagine a more fitting case, if there was on either side a desire to avoid war, for arbitration than a case which concerned the boundaries of a country. He hoped that there would be a peaceful settlement of this disagreement, and that it would turn out, as he hoped it would, that the Russians had not determined on war. If it should happen that Russian officers had exceeded their instructions, there was yet room to hope that peace might be maintained.

Mr. ONSLOW said, that hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House ought to take heart at the words and attitude assumed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross). At last it was found that the Front Opposition Bench were taking an interest in this subject. Many hon. Gentlemen last Session did all they could to induce some Members on the Opposition Bench to take a deeper interest in this question than they had hitherto done; and last night, when many hon. Members remained to discuss this most important Vote, the Bench below him was as bald as the

palm of his hand. He was glad to see his right hon. Friend (Sir R. Assheton Cross) come to the front and take an interest in this question, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would continue to do so. After the remarks of the Prime Minister earlier in the evening, in reply to a question put, not as regarded the policy of Her Majesty's Government on the Afghan Frontier, but upon a side-issue, by an hon. Gentleman whose honesty of purpose everyone in the House appreciated, but who belonged to what was called the "Peace-at-any-price Party"—a Gentleman who put a particular question to the Prime Minister, not with regard to the policy of the question, but merely for the sake of obtaining, if possible, peace at any price—he (Mr. Onslow) thought the House ought to have more definite answers from one or other Member of Her Majesty's Government to the questions which were put in the course of the afternoon. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) was in his place, and it was due to the country that they should know exactly the position of affairs at the present time. The announcement of the Prime Minister was of the gravest importance; but was there, after all, anything in it? Would the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War come forward, and, if it were possible, appease the anxiety which had been raised in the country lately on account of the aggressions of Russia—would he come forward and say that Russia was behaving nobly in this matter? [*A laugh.*] Hon. Gentlemen laughed at the idea of Russia behaving nobly. So did he. Would the noble Marquess come forward to say that Russia was behaving honourably in this matter, and that she had at the last moment given way? He (Mr. Onslow) deprecated the kind of answers which were given by the Prime Minister. There was no doubt that Russia had advanced. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) had said he was glad there was a truce. Why, the Afghans had not advanced. If there was a truce, he (Mr. Onslow) supposed that both parties must be aggressors. Had the Ruler of Afghan been the aggressor? The hon. Gentleman (Sir George Campbell) knew as well as he (Mr. Onslow) did—and, perhaps, even better—that the Russians had been the aggressors, and therefore it was absurd to say there had been a truce. In the interest of India he hoped that before the debate closed some remark from the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) would go forward to corroborate what the Prime Minister had said earlier in the evening. He hoped that it was in the power of the noble Marquess to tell the country, in even stronger words than those used by the Prime Minister, that after all there was no cause for anxiety, that the state of affairs was as calm and as peaceable as possible. He trusted that in the negotiations the Ameer of Afghanistan was not being forgotten. The Ameer was a most important factor in this question, and if Her Majesty's Government signed away his territory, and allowed Russia to take any part of the ground which was alleged to belong to the Afghans, did Her Majesty's Government suppose they would retain the friendship of the Ameer? If they did that, did they suppose they would get the Ameer to say—"I will support you, and do everything for you in preference to Russia?" Let him (Mr. Onslow) tell the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) and the other Members of the Cabinet who were present, that unless they behaved honourably to the Ameer of Afghanistan, they would make him and all his successors eternal enemies of this country. He (Mr. Onslow) therefore maintained that on all these matters the Government ought to consult the Ameer. He knew the difficulties of the question; he foresaw them many months ago, and he warned the Government of what really would happen. The Government seemed to have done nothing at all. They had tried to blink this question entirely, and now it had come upon them with one fell swoop, and at a time when they did not expect it. He hoped something might be said that night to allay the anxiety of the country. London had been placarded that night with—"Concessions made, and peace restored between England any Russia." Was there any truth whatever in that report? It was due to the country that it should know at the earliest moment. This was not a question of truce between Russia and Afghanistan; it was a question of peace between Russia an England; and

he earnestly hoped that the noble Marquess would see his way that night to give the House and the country the assurance that there was no cause for anxiety.

MR. T. C. BARING quite agreed that a distinction ought to be made between matters of policy and matters of fact. He did not think that Her Majesty's Government were called upon to give the House at this time any information on matters of policy; but he listened very closely to what the Prime Minister said on this subject, at the commencement of that day's sitting, and he was unable to discover what was meant by the agreement made between Russia and England—England, the right hon. Gentleman distinctly said, not the Ameer of Afghanistan—that neither party should advance from the position they then occupied. If any Member of Her Majesty's Government was able to tell the House that this agreement had been made within the last three or four days, he could assert on his own positive knowledge that the news would be received in the country with the greatest feelings of relief. If the statement of the Prime Minister only referred to an agreement which was made before the Russians took up the positions they now occupied on the borders of Afghanistan, the statement was one which would not give any confidence to the country. This was a plain matter of fact. All he and his hon. Friends wanted to know was whether there had been any arrangement made—whatever arrangement it might be—within the last few days; had there been a temporary suspension so to speak of what threatened to be active military operations?

MR. TOMLINSON desired to revert to a matter to which he drew attention late last night—namely, the ratification of the Congo Treaty. The effect of what he stated last night had been, in some quarters, misunderstood. In Committee, the previous evening, he drew attention to the fact that the Government had, in substance, failed to fulfil a promise they made to the House with regard to the discussion of the Treaty before its ratification. He did not wish it to be understood that he accused the Government of having intentionally ratified the Treaty after having promised that it should be submitted to the House before ratification; but the point he wished to enforce was that, having promised to submit the Treaty to the consideration of the House before ratification, they went to the Conference of Berlin, at which the Treaty was treated as being binding upon this country, without its ever being submitted to the House. The country was by this means bound by the Treaty before Parliament had had the opportunity of discussing it. In corroboration of the view he took that the Government had not, during the negotiations, kept their promise in view, he noticed that, on the 9th of May last, Earl Granville, speaking in "another place," spoke of a formal Resolution approving of the Treaty having been arrived at in the House of Commons. Earl Granville seemed to have imagined that the Treaty in which England waived a right she had long enjoyed had been submitted to the House of Commons. As a matter of fact, that was not so. He (Mr. Tomlinson) thought that, notwithstanding what the Prime Minister said last night, this was a matter deserving of attention. The Government distinctly promised that the Treaty should not be used to the detriment of what some people considered the interests of this country, until the House of Commons had had an opportunity of discussing it; but, without affording the opportunity they promised, they went into a Conference, and their Agents, acting upon instructions, were ready to make the Treaty binding upon them.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, they were placed in a rather peculiar position. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had put very simple and plain questions on matters of fact to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington). Earlier in the evening the Prime Minister asserted that he was ready to answer any questions on matters of fact, though he deprecated—["Oh!"] Yes, he was in the recollection of the House. The Prime Minister distinctly said he had no objection whatever to answer any questions on matters of fact, though he deprecated, and, as he (Mr. R. H. Paget) thought, very rightly deprecated, any attempt to ask questions on matters of policy. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire had put questions on pure matters

of fact, and how had the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) met those questions? He had entirely evaded answering any one of them. He had not said it would be inconvenient or injurious to the public interest that he should answer them; he had not said he was not in possession of information which would enable him to answer them; he had made no such reply, but had, in a cloud of words, evaded giving any simple straightforward and plain answers to what were plain questions on matters of fact. Now, he thought that the House had a right to ask Her Majesty's Government that they should either say that the information in their possession did not enable them to answer the right hon. Gentleman's questions, or that it was not convenient in the public interests that any reply should be made. Let them have one thing or the other. As it was, the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had simply endeavoured to blind the House. There was no attempt on the part of any hon. Gentleman to force Her Majesty's Government to disclose anything which would be injurious to the Public Service. All they desired was plain and categorical answers to one or two very plain questions.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I hope the House will not be disposed to push this discussion very much further. The House has been informed on two very recent occasions that it is not by any means desirable in the present state of the negotiations between this country and Russia upon the affairs of the frontier of Afghanistan to discuss the policy which is being pursued. We are asked to make certain declarations as to matters of fact. It might be possible on some occasions to draw distinctions between matters of fact and matters of policy; but in such a discussion as this it is impossible to distinguish between them. I was not in the House when the Prime Minister gave his answer to the Question of the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil (Mr. Richard) this evening; but it is now asked of me somewhat to extend the declaration which the right hon. Gentleman made. I feel that I should be taking a great responsibility, affecting not only the Government, but interests far transcending those affecting any Government, if I were to attempt now to extend any answer given by the Prime Minister, the purport of which I am not sufficiently acquainted with. If hon. Gentlemen think it is desirable that this question should be discussed, it ought to be with due Notice, and with such Notice as will enable the Members of the Government to give such information as they think desirable. The Government should have the opportunity of weighing carefully what can be said and what ought not to be said at a moment like the present. Not having heard the discussion this evening, I really feel I should be doing that which I should not be justified in doing if I were to attempt to extend the declaration of the Prime Minister. The hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) has asked me to say whether, in our opinion, Russia has behaved nobly, and to give an assurance that there is no cause for anxiety. Well, Sir, whatever else I might say, that is precisely what I cannot say. There is cause for anxiety; and it is because there is cause for anxiety that I think it is extremely undesirable that any attempt should be made to lead the House into a discussion that cannot possibly, on the present occasion, do good, but might, if any ungnarded word were used, do a great deal of harm. Under the circumstances, therefore, it is perfectly impossible to make a distinction between matters of fact and questions of policy; and I think it is extremely desirable that this discussion should be closed.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was sure the House had no desire whatever to discuss questions of policy or to engage in any discussion which might be considered to be injurious to the public interest. He must, however, remind the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) that his right hon. Friend (Sir R. Assheton Cross) did not ask to discuss the question of their relations with Russia at the present moment in any degree; he simply put a few questions as to matters of fact, and as to the date of the agreement referred to by the Prime Minister, as to whether advances had been made on either side since that agreement had been come to, and as to whether the agreement recognized the positions already taken up by the respective Forces. He could only say this

—that if it was impossible for the Government to give answers to those questions on matters of fact, the anxiety in the country would undoubtedly be very greatly increased. Personally, he thought that the statement of the Prime Minister was not so precise, so clear, and so distinct as to render questions of this kind unnecessary. The questions of his right hon. Friend (Sir R. Assheton Cross) were intended to evoke, if possible, answers which would give confidence to the country which the country desired to have; and while he had no wish to push the matter further that evening, he trusted the Government would be prepared on Monday to give distinct information on the questions which had been put by his right hon. Friend—put with no wish or desire to discuss the policy of the Government, but simply to re-assure the country as to the actual position of affairs.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he had only one word to say, and it was in support of the observations of his right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith). He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) could not conceive even in the interests of peace why the noble Marquess (the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) could not answer this one plain and simple question—"Is this a new agreement, or is it an agreement which was made some time ago?" It was a plain question, it was a simple question, it was a question which the noble Marquess, he was sure, could answer; and his answer, if satisfactory, would unquestionably produce a feeling of great relief in the country.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Resolutions 3 to 10, inclusive, *agreed to.*

(11.) "That a sum, not exceeding £20,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, for a Grant to the Family of the late General Charles George Gordon."

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he did not desire to raise any discussion at all upon this Vote; but he did not wish it to pass by without some remarks with regard to the great services of the late lamented General Gordon. Little, very little, had been said of the services which General Gordon had rendered to the country; and he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) presumed that this Vote of £20,000 was intended as some acknowledgment by the Government of the extraordinary work that this great and good man had done by his unselfishness, by the Christian feeling he had shown on every occasion, by his singleness of purpose, by his strict determination to do his duty, and by those unparalleled resources which he had shown in maintaining the honour and dignity of this country under the most trying and most difficult circumstances. His defence of Khartoum would fill a great page in the history of the world; and he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) presumed that the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, and those who were associated with him, had thought that, at any rate, his family did deserve at the hands of this country some recompense for his great and extraordinary services.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that it was at a very late hour last night when this Vote was brought on in Committee of Supply, but when it did come on, he ventured to say a few words to show how much the Government felt the great loss of General Gordon. He gave then the reasons why they thought that this Vote should be passed. No one could deplore and regret General Gordon's loss more than he did, particularly as he had the honour of his friendship. He trusted, however, that at that hour of the night (1 o'clock), the House would not expect him to say more upon the subject.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he thought the House was indebted to the hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) for having elicited, even at that time of night, a few remarks from the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer upon this matter. The Vote was one of an exceptional character, and therefore it ought to have been brought on at a time when the House was full, and when the debate would find prominence in the ordinary channels of information. General Gordon was no ordinary man, and to give this Vote to his family was, after all, but a meagre recognition of his services. He thought that Her Majesty's Government was distinctly at fault in having forced the Vote on when it could not receive other than the most scanty consideration.

Resolution *agreed to*

(12.) "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £292,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to make good the deficiency in the provision made for the service of the Army during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, owing to the Non-payment by Egypt of the extra cost of the Army of Occupation."

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he did not intend to detain the House more than one minute; but here, again, they had a very large Vote to be devoted to a very peculiar purpose, brought on at a time when it was utterly impossible to adequately discuss it. He remained in the House until very late last night, only leaving at an hour after which he thought the Government would not attempt to take this Vote. As a matter of fact, the Vote was brought on somewhere between 3 and 4 o'clock in the morning. It was a Vote which at any other time would have led to a considerable amount of discussion. When it was considered that this money ought to have been paid by the Egyptian Government, and not by the taxpayers of this country, it would be generally considered that it was but fair there should have been an opportunity of debating the great and serious question involved. He would not now enter into the question when they were to have the Agreement before them; but it was a very remarkable fact that very nearly two years ago the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that Egypt was on the point of bankruptcy, and that it would be impossible for the then Egyptian financial arrangements to be carried on. Two years had since elapsed, and nothing had been done to settle the Egyptian financial difficulties; but they were called upon to pay a sum which ought to have been paid by Egypt. The fault, in his opinion, laid at the door of Her Majesty's Government; and, in one sense, he was glad that the Egyptian financial matters had not been settled. He hoped that for some time they would not be settled, except they were settled by England, because England, who had spent her blood and her treasure in the interests of that country, ought to have the sole determination of what should be done in Egypt.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he would not enter into the political question to which the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) alluded. He wished, however, to make it quite clear to the House that this Vote would not, as was stated, fall upon the taxpayers of this country. The Egyptian Government ought properly to have paid before the 31st of this current month of March a certain sum of money towards the expenses of the Army of Occupation. That payment for this year had been postponed from time to time in consequence of the financial condition of Egypt. It was hoped, until within a week or two ago, that this money would have been paid before the 31st of March. It would not be paid, however, until the financial year beginning in April, because until then the loan would not be raised. When the loan was raised the money would be paid, and the taxpayers of this country would not have to pay one single farthing of the amount. He thought he had made the point clear last night, for he answered several questions which satisfied hon. Gentlemen. He had only now to repeat that this was not a proposal to charge the taxpayers of the country one single farthing; but in consequence of the failure of the Egyptian Government to raise a loan in the present month, this money was required to be voted now. When the money was paid, which it would be by the Egyptian Government next financial year, it would be paid into the Exchequer.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he could not agree with the view of this matter which was taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and therefore he could not allow the Vote to pass without protest. It was all very well to say it was only a question whether this money was to be paid before or after the 31st of March. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them that they ought to have got this money from the Egyptian Exchequer, and tha when the Egyptian Exchequer did have it, it would pay it over to them. Would the Egyptian Government have the money after the 31st of March? What he understood was that they were to raise money to pay themselves; they were to take money out of one pocket in order to put it in another. It might be that the taxpayers of this country would not have to pay the money at this moment; but there would be a liability in the matter which he had every reason to suppose would last. He would not so much mind if that were the only sum

they would have to pay; but it seemed to him that this was a continuing sum. It might be, by raising a loan on their security, that this particular sum would be repaid; but what was to happen in the next year, and in the years after that? What he had understood was that the Egyptian Exchequer was only to meet what might be called a nominal sum—something like £100,000. The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): No.] He (Sir George Campbell) was very glad to hear that that was not so; and he only hoped and trusted that the financial arrangements might be something entirely different. This country, and indeed all the countries in Europe, had been led to believe that the financial condition of Egypt was of such a character that the main burden, or almost the whole of the charge, for the defence of Egypt would fall on this country. There was no prospect that they would ever be relieved of the charge. It seemed to him that this had been a very radical error in regard to their arrangements in Egypt. All their troubles arose from the failure to take into consideration the necessity of the defence of the country. They dismissed the Egyptian Army, and what was the result? Their troubles in the Soudan had been the result. Indeed, all their troubles had been the result of such a policy; and unless the financial position turned out to be something very different from what it was supposed to be, they would have a continuing burden for the defences of Egypt thrown upon the taxpayers of this country, while the creditors of the sequestered estate went scot-free. He hoped the financial arrangements of the country would turn out better than he imagined; but, at present, he protested against this Vote, and would not accept the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he thought the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) had done good service in calling attention to this matter. The House was now asked to vote a sum of money to insure the payment to the bondholders of their interest. The plain English of the matter was that the Egyptian Treasury was in default, and that Her Majesty's Government were putting a burden upon the taxpayers of this country, in order that the Egyptian bondholders should be paid in full. Unquestionably, this was a bondholder's question; and, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcaldy had pointed out, the question which not only that House but the country at large would have to face was, whether or not the bondholders were to be paid in full? If they were, it was the taxpayers of England who would have to make good the deficit. The House was told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he hoped in future Egypt would be able to pay this sum. But the right hon. Gentleman alluded to some visionary loans and agreements to which, as hon. Gentlemen well knew, no sanction had been given. Even yet the settlement of Egyptian finances was in abeyance; and for the moment they were face to face with this state of things—that they were now paying out of their income a sum of money which they were led to expect would be found by Egypt, and which could not be found by Egypt, because the bondholders had to be paid in full. It was just as well that the people should know what this Vote which was hurried through the House at 4 o'clock yesterday morning really meant.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Remaining Resolution *agreed to.*

REGISTRATION (OCCUPATION VOTERS) BILL.—[BILL 63.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Sir Charles Dilke, Mr. Hibbert, Mr. H. H. Fowler.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he wished to move the second reading of the Bill. It was a purely technical measure, and the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. E. Stanhope), who took an interest in it, had suggested that when it was read a second time it would be well to refer it to a Select Committee. He (the Attorney General) would be very pleased to accept that suggestion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

MR. WARTON asked the hon. and learned Gentleman whether he himself would move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): Yes; at once.

Motion *agreed to.*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): I now beg to move that the Bill be referred to a Select Committee.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *committed* to a Select Committee.

PEASANT PROPRIETARY AND ACQUISITION OF LAND BY OCCUPIERS BILL.—[BILL 43.]

(*Mr. Jesse Collings, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr. George Palmer, Mr. Burt, Mr. Broadhurst.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading upon Wednesday next read, and *discharged.*

Bill *withdrawn.*

MOTIONS.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS (IRELAND) BILL.

On Motion of Colonel COLTHURST, Bill further to facilitate the building, enlargement, and maintenance of Industrial Schools in Ireland, *ordered* to be brought in by Colonel COLTHURST, Colonel NOLAN, Mr. SHAW, Mr. MARTIN, Mr. THOMAS DICKSON, and Mr. BLENNERHASSETT.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 96.]

PEASANT PROPRIETARY AND ACQUISITION OF LAND BY OCCUPIERS (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Bill to facilitate the creation of a Peasant Proprietary and the acquisition of Land by Occupiers, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr JESSE COLLINGS, Mr. ROBERT REID, Mr. GEORGE PALMER, Mr. BURT, and Mr. BROADHURST.

House adjourned at a quarter after One o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 16*th March*, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Elections (Hours of Poll) * (43); Educational Endowments (Ireland) * (44).

PRIVATE BILLS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN asked the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees, Whether he could not give a little longer Notice than he now did—some reasonable Notice—of his intention to move forward with Private Bills? At present, Notice was only given to noble Lords on the very morning of the day on which the Motions with regard to Private Bills were to be made, and unless noble Lords happened to read the Notice Papers very carefully they lost the opportunity they might desire of making any remarks they thought necessary. He himself intended to show that some of the provisions of the Vauxhall Water Bill were not in the public interest; but he found on Saturday morning that the Bill had been read a second time.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, that he would take care that a little longer Notice was given.

CENTRAL ASIA—ENGLAND AND RUSSIA.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, perhaps the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will answer a Question, of which I have given him private Notice, with respect to the very remarkable statement made in "another place" by the Prime Minister as to the state of the negotiations with Russia. It was stated that an agreement had been entered into of which the effect was that neither party should advance their outposts from the positions which they occupy at present—that is to say, that the Russians should not advance beyond where they are now, nor the Afghans advance on their side. There was great doubt in the language used as to the time when that agreement was contracted, and I wish to clear up that doubt, and to ask the noble Lord whether it is an entirely recent agreement, contracted during the last week, or whether it was contracted before that time; and whether he can give us the date of it? There is another and much more important Question—what the duration of that agreement is; how long this undertaking on both sides is to last? The third Question which I put to the noble Earl appears to me the most important of all, and that is, whether the Afghan Government is a party to this agreement entered into with Russia?

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, in answer to the noble Marquess, I believe Mr. Gladstone stated that—

"It has been agreed between Russia and England that no further advance should be made by the Russian or Afghan forces respectively to points within the debateable or debated ground."

Mr. Gladstone spoke on the strength of telegrams from the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, the latest of which was dated March 5. On Saturday, to obviate any possibility of misapprehension, I telegraphed this passage to St. Petersburg, and asked Sir Edward Thornton to ascertain whether M. de Giers agrees that the assurances contained in the telegrams referred to constitute an agreement to the effect stated by Mr. Gladstone. Under these circumstances, I abstain from going further at present into the question.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I beg to give Notice that I shall renew the Question to-morrow.

AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES—COLONIAL NAVAL FORCE.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, in rising to move for Correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and the Governments of any of the Australasian Colonies relative to the formation and maintenance of a Colonial Naval Force, said, he understood that a great deal of Correspondence had passed between the Colonial Office and the Admiralty on this subject. He wished to point out how very essential a Navy was almost to the existence of our Colonies. The Naval Force which we now sent out to the Colonies was totally inadequate at present, and we had done very little indeed towards helping the Colonies to establish a Naval Force of their own. The First Lord of the Admiralty seemed the other night to be under the mistaken impression that he had charged the Admiralty with being hostile to the establishment of a Naval Force in the Colonies. He had not the slightest intention of making any accusation of that kind against the Admiralty; but he did maintain that the effort made by the Colonies in providing themselves with ships did impose on the Admiralty some obligation to meet the natural wishes of the Colonies. The noble Earl the First Lord of the Admiralty had, he believed, said that some kind of assistance had been already given to the Colonies, and that several naval officers were already there. He did not want to underrate that assistance; but it had never been definitely stated by the noble Earl, and the information he possessed on the subject had been picked up piecemeal here and there. The Colonies were extremely anxious for their self-defence, and were more or less waiting for the Admiralty to make some proposal to them. The noble Earl was of opinion that the initiative should come from the Colonies; but for his own part he ventured to think that they had already taken a step in advance, and it was therefore now open to the Government to make some proposal which would lead to the formation of a Colonial Force. It appeared to him that two courses lay open to the Admiralty. They might either send out an experienced officer to organize the whole of the local Marine—and it so happened that an officer who would command the highest respect had been named as quite willing to go out and organize a Naval Force, and if he were to do so it would not be long before there was a Force in existence—or they might name a certain number of officers to serve in the Colonies for a limited number of years, their pay being defrayed by the Colonies and their promotion being allowed to go on in the same way as at present. The latter course would be acceptable to many naval officers who were now in a state of enforced idleness. Looking at the Navy List, he found that there were 70 captains, about 75 commanders, and between 80 and 90 lieutenants at present unemployed. As to the first proposal, there was a precedent for it, as in former days, when the East India Company maintained a Navy of its own, the Admiralty used to send out a distinguished naval officer who had the sole management of the Bombay Marine. What the Colonies now required was a body of trained naval officers to enable them to form a Navy. The Colonies had a certain number of men who might easily be trained to the management of torpedo vessels to be used for the protection of their harbours. Such a torpedo force would be of the greatest value in protecting the local commerce of those Colonies, which amounted to some 10,000,000 tons per annum, and their enormous coast-line.

If the noble Earl would take the initiative for the purpose of forming a federation of the Colonies in the matter of defence, he would find the Colonies most ready to receive any suggestion he might make. He urged the Admiralty to place cadetships at the disposal of the Colonies with the object of developing the maritime spirit of the Colonists. In conclusion, he begged to submit the Motion of which he had given Notice.

Address for—

"Copies of or extracts from Correspondence between Her Majesty's Government and the Governments of any of the Australasian Colonies relative to the formation and maintenance of a Colonial naval force."—(*The Viscount Sidmouth.*)

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: My Lords, I have been requested by my noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Derby) to answer the Questions of the noble Viscount opposite. The noble Viscount asked whether applications had been made by the Australian Colonies of Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia, for advice and assistance as to manning vessels of war. I have to state in reply that such applications have been received, and that they have been in every case freely and fully complied with. I may further say that the Admiralty have received warm thanks from the Agents General for the way in which they have acted in the matter. I can assure the noble Viscount that many officers of merit in Her Majesty's Navy would be glad to go out to the Colonies in the capacity of training officers, and if any applications are made from the Colonies for further assistance your Lordships may be satisfied that the Admiralty will give them every assistance. I can also state that suggestions have been made by the Government as to the general scope of the Naval Force in the Colonies, and much assistance has been rendered by the Construction Department of the Admiralty in the supervision of the ships which have been built for the Colonies. During the last few years there have been constant communications between the Agents General for the Colonies and the Admiralty on the subject, and the Naval Commander-in-Chief in Australia has also been in frequent communication with the Governments of the Colonies in reference to their Naval Forces. In reply to the next Question of the noble Viscount, I have to state that there have been proposals made by the Admiralty as to a scheme of organization of a Colonial Naval Force; but the Admiralty are of opinion generally that it is not desirable that they should initiate any such scheme, but should leave the Colonies themselves to initiate it. In order, however, to facilitate the initiation of such a scheme, Rear Admiral Tryon, before he left this country as Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's vessels in the Australian waters, had communications with my noble Friend the Colonial Secretary and myself, in order that he might be able to lay before the Australian Governments the views of Her Majesty's Government on this matter, which has been very carefully considered by Her Majesty's Government during the last three years. The next Question of the noble Viscount, being based upon the supposition that nothing has been done in the direction it indicated, falls to the ground, inasmuch as the Admiralty have already stated that they will be most happy to assist in every way those Colonies who wish to form a Navy, if their Agents General will be so good as to communicate with them upon the matter; and I now publicly invite such communications to be made to us. As to the Question referring to nominations to cadetships in the Navy, I have to say that a certain number of nominations have been thrown open to the Colonies for many years, and the Colonial young gentlemen are admitted to the Navy upon passing a qualifying examination. These cadetships are annually given on the recommendation of the Colonial Secretary, so that the noble Viscount's suggestion upon this matter has been met by anticipation. With regard to the Motion, I assent to it, with the qualification that such Papers as can properly be given shall be laid on the Table.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON said, that his noble Friend might congratulate himself upon having elicited from the Government a very important statement, and one which was well worthy of the attention of the House, and their Lordships would read the Papers moved for with very great interest, because he understood that many applications had been made, and that they would show what it was that the Colonies wanted

and what the Government were willing to do. It seemed to him, however, from the statement of the noble Earl opposite, that the whole burden of initiating a Colonial Naval Force had been thrown upon the Colonies instead of Her Majesty's Government taking it upon themselves. It was in the memory of many Members of that House that some few years ago an Act was passed for the purpose of establishing a Colonial Navy, and it was a question of no small interest why that Act had failed to answer the expectations and intentions of those who desired that it should be passed. That Act had, however, failed to secure that amount of naval discipline which was not only desirable, but absolutely necessary, in a Colonial Force, and to bring it into close connection with the British Navy. One objection was that the Australian Colonies were either unwilling or, at all events, unprepared to accept joint liability for the defence of the Empire. The facts had disproved this, and there could now be no doubt as to what the disposition of the Colonies was. But there was also another objection which claimed great consideration, and that was that Australian ships must never be removed from Australia for Imperial purposes. He was bound to say there was great reason in that objection. His own view, however, was that, first, they should be able to secure that any ship or ships created by Australian expenditure should be maintained on the Australian Coast; and, secondly, that those ships should be brought into connection with the Empire, and, where practicable, interchanged, becoming part and parcel of the Imperial Naval Force. He owned he was disposed to go a step beyond his noble Friend. He thought there would be no harm in arranging that every Australian officer in the Australian Naval Service should directly hold the Queen's commission; secondly, that they should give to the Australian Government or Colony the same number of commissions as would be represented by ships which they established and maintained. These ships should be placed—and he would admit of no compromise on this point—under the direct control of the English Admiralty. Nothing short of this would secure the incorporation which they wished to see effected between the Colonial and Home Naval Forces of this country. Either these Colonial ships should be maintained on the Colonial station or rendered available and interchangeable in time of extreme peril. It had been his lot to watch the growth of feeling in the Colonies on this subject. In 1878 he made proposals to these great Colonies with regard to incurring joint liability with the Mother Country in various matters, and, among others, in naval matters; and if his proposal had been adopted much of the trouble which had since arisen in the South Pacific would have been prevented. Still later he was Chairman of a Colonial Commission; and there was then much more practical co-operation than before. That was four or five years ago. Since then they had advanced nearer to a common ground. He deprecated the conduct of the Government in not taking the initiative in this matter; and he sincerely trusted that the result of recent communications between the Imperial Government and the Colonies would be to further advance that most desirable of objects—a closer co-operation between those great Colonies and the Mother Country.

THE EARL OF DERBY said, everybody was agreed as to the desirability of the object referred to by the noble Earl. It was the wish of the Colonies as well as that of the Imperial Government. They were also all agreed that it was desirable the Colonies should assist in providing for their own defence; but there would be no disposition on our part to drive a hard bargain. On the contrary, the disposition would be to deal liberally with the Colonies. But he was free to say that he went further than this, and that he agreed with his noble Friend that the time was very auspicious for the consideration of these questions. There was no doubt various circumstances had arisen to develop a stronger feeling of self-defence and desire to co-operate with the other parts of the British Empire than had existed before. He did not, however, think they could bring forward any plan of naval defence until after the creation of a Federal Authority, which should be able to represent and speak in the name of the Australian Colonies collectively. They could not deal with a question of this kind with several divided Authorities. Then his noble Friend said that this was a

question as to which the Imperial Government ought to take the initiative, and that the Government ought not to leave the matter to merely local action. The question of securing joint action between the Australian and Imperial Navy was one that had been carefully considered by Her Majesty's Government; and he was able to say that the Admiral who had lately gone out to that station was in possession of a plan carefully prepared and considered by the Admiralty in concert with the Colonial Office. He hoped that the result would be to create an arrangement which, whether permanent or not, would, at any rate, meet the necessities of the time. He was unable at a moment's notice to pronounce any opinion upon the plan sketched out by the noble Earl opposite; but, to show that the subject was not one easy to dispose of, he might point out, on the one hand, that the Colonies had a right to ask that the funds locally raised should be expended for the purpose of local defence; while, on the other, it was obvious that local defence could not be effectually provided unless it was dealt with as part of a general plan. How to reconcile these apparently conflicting requirements was the problem to be solved. It would be much simplified when they got a Federal Authority to speak in the name of all these Colonies; in the meanwhile, he could only assure their Lordships that the matter was not neglected, and that Her Majesty's Government were making overtures on the subject, and that Papers on the matter would be laid on the Table without unnecessary delay.

Motion *agreed to.*

EGYPT (THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE) —ARMY CHAPLAINS IN THE SOUDAN.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON, in rising to move—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for a Return of the number of the chaplains attached to Her Majesty's forces in the Soudan, and the distribution of them,"

said, he had noticed that Army chaplains had not been present with the Soudan Expedition: but he was sure there was no wish on their part to be absent from any place where their services might be required. He perfectly understood that the distribution of both combatants and non-combatants must be left to the discretion of the General in command, and he was also aware that no General desired to attach to his Force any more non-combatants than necessary. Still, it must not be forgotten that the ministrations of the chaplains to the wounded, the sick, and the dying were just as essential as the medicines served out from the ambulance tent. If the chaplains were absent from the front, he was sure it was from no wish of their own. The post of the chaplains was naturally that of duty and danger, and they wished nothing better than to accompany the officers whom it was their business to attend. The noble Earl concluded by making his Motion.

Address for—

"Return of the number of the chaplains attached to Her Majesty's forces in the Soudan, and the distribution of them."—(*The Earl of Carnarvon.*)

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, that he had not the slightest objection to grant the Return asked for. He could tell the noble Earl the number of chaplains now in Egypt and the Soudan. There were now in Egypt, independently of those at Alexandria, Cairo, and other points on the Lower Nile, 12 Army chaplains; of these five were Church of England, three Roman Catholic, two Presbyterian, and two Wesleyan. At Suakin the number of chaplains was as follows:—Two Church of England, two Roman Catholic, one Presbyterian, and one Wesleyan. As regarded the distribution of the chaplains, there was such a constant change going on that he was unable to give their present distribution. There was no wish that the chaplains should be kept away from the front or wherever their duty called them, and he was quite certain that it would be the earnest wish of the chaplains themselves to be present wherever required, no matter what the danger might be. As his noble Friend had stated, the distribution of the chaplains rested with the General commanding the troops, and he could only say that the Authorities at headquarters were most anxious that the services of the chaplains to administer the consolations of religion to the wounded and the dying should be available whenever required.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said, that it must have been noticed

that the funerals of some of the most eminent persons who had been unfortunately killed in the Soudan had been performed by laymen—it might be presumed, because no clergy were at hand. He had also seen letters speaking of the want of chaplains to attend to the sick and dying at the front. The chaplains had no duty on foreign service with an Army more important than attendance on the wounded, the sick, and the dying; and those who had gone to Egypt earnestly desired to exercise their ministrations to the utmost and not to be kept safe. He might add that chaplains had often proved useful on other occasions, as well as in attending the sick and dying. The responsibility of the distribution of the chaplains, he was well aware, must rest with the General in command; but it seemed to him that to forbid the chaplains to carry out their special work—that of attending the wounded—would be the same thing as the sanitary authority of a town in which cholera prevailed, forbidding the clergy from exerting themselves for the relief of the sufferers, at the very time when they were most able and most anxious to be of service. The chaplains were few in number, and, few as they were, their services were most important, and the men devoted to their work.

Motion *agreed to.*

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN.—COLONIES MILITARY SERVICE.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS, in rising to move—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty humbly thanking Her Majesty for having graciously accepted the loyal offer of military service from New South Wales, and expressing the satisfaction with which this House has heard the announcement that the like loyal offers of military service from other Colonies, and also from India, will, should occasion arise, be duly accepted,"

said, that his Motion appeared to be a natural supplement to what had already been said in the House that evening with reference to a Colonial Navy. Happily for their Lordships, he was incapable of lengthened speech; but, happily for himself, he believed the Motion to be one that would commend itself to the favourable consideration of their Lordships. Amid the innumerable troubles that had recently come upon them they could, at least, look with pride and satisfaction at the general conduct of their Army in the field, and at the courage, the discipline, the endurance and dash of their troops under the most trying circumstances. They could also look with pride at the enthusiasm with which all ranks and all conditions of their soldiers had left for the seat of war, accompanied by the cheers of a sympathetic people. But if there was one thing at the present time more than another which was a just cause for national pride and satisfaction, it was the love for the Mother Country shown by their great Colonies in their hearty, loyal offers of military service in the Soudan. There was a section—happily, but a small section—of politicians, unrepresented, he was confident, in their Lordships' House, who held that England would be happier and more prosperous if shorn of her Colonies, and even if deprived of her Indian Empire. As regarded their Indian Empire, the answer to those who would wish to see India separated from the Empire was given in the hearty offers of assistance which had come from the Native Indian Princes, and the ready services of the Indian troops in the Soudan; and within the last few days the Prime Minister himself had stated that, however disunited England might be on other questions, she was united in her determination that India, the Koh-i-Noor of the British Crown, should not be struck from off it. But as regarded the separation of the Colonies from England, there had never been a time in their history when the ties between them and the Mother Country had been so strong and so hearty as at the present time. Why, what had they seen lately? A League for the federation of the Colonies had been formed in this country, at the head of which was Mr. Forster, and of which his noble Friend the most recent addition to the Government the Earl of Rosebery was a distinguished member. The object of this League was to draw closer the ties and means of defence as between the Colonies and the Empire. This question of the federation of the Colonies was one upon which there was considerable difference of opinion as to how it should be effected; and as in the few remarks he intended to make he did not wish to enter into any controversial question, he would

not discuss the best form of federation. There was, however, nothing which could contribute more to the strength of the Empire than a defensive union of the Colonies with the Mother Country. The dream of his life had been to see his country strong. He wished to see England strong, not that she might go hectoring, bullying, blustering through the world, unnecessarily seizing unoccupied territory, or treading on the susceptibilities of other nations. He wished to see England strong, because he wished that Empire which had been handed down by those who had gone before them to be transmitted, unimpaired, to those who were to come after them. Especially did he wish to see England strong in the interests of peace, because he thought that nothing would contribute more to the peace of the world than the knowledge that England was united and strong. And, as he had said, if there was one thing more than another which would make their Empire strong, it was a defensive union between the Colonies and the Mother Country—the good of all being the care of each, and the good of each the care of all. Nothing could strengthen the hands of a Foreign Minister more than the knowledge that any foreign country would have to deal not simply with these little storm-beaten Islands in a Northern Sea, but would be face to face with an Empire, or rather a congeries of Empires, scattered over the whole habitable world. The Colonies by their action had in a great measure solved the question of federation. If he was rightly informed, Members of the Cabinet had been in communication with the Agents General of the Colonies for the purpose of discussing the question of mutual defences; and little more was necessary in the matter of federation than the systematizing in the future what had now been done. But, be that as it might, he held that the offers made by the Colonies formed a great event in our history. No doubt, the Colonies had on previous occasions come forward with offers of assistance, one instance of which was commemorated in the name of what had formerly been the 100th Regiment, now the Royal Canadians. They had heard, too, how the Australian Colonies had offered naval help; but this was the first time that such offers had taken so concrete a form. It was an event pregnant with a great and untold future. Seeing, then, the unanimity throughout this country in appreciating the action of the Colonies in this matter, he thought it was desirable that their Lordships' House should give expression to this universal national sentiment, and that there should be some record on their Journals fuller than the casual reference made to the subject in the debate on calling out of the Reserves. He hoped, therefore, that their Lordships would now unanimously agree—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty humbly thanking Her Majesty for having graciously accepted the loyal offer of military service from New South Wales; and expressing the satisfaction with which this House has heard the announcement that the like loyal offers of military service from other Colonies, and also from India, will, should occasion arise, be duly accepted."

And when they remembered the gracious words addressed by Her Majesty to the Colonies with reference to this matter, they had the satisfaction of knowing that in carrying such an Address to the Queen they would be acting in unison with the sentiments of their Sovereign.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty humbly thanking Her Majesty for having graciously accepted the loyal offer of military service from New South Wales; and expressing the satisfaction with which this House has heard the announcement that the like loyal offers of military service from other Colonies, and also from India, will, should occasion arise, be duly accepted."—(*The Earl of Wemyss.*)

LORD NORTON said, that he yielded to none in high appreciation of the loyal offers of military co-operation on the part of the Colonies; but he thought that it would be a poor compliment to such revived loyalty to treat it as something new. By doing so they could only show how soon they would forget such loyalty, and that they had already forgotten that the same loyalty enlisted Colonists a century ago to fight by the side of British troops against great French Armies in America, and even to acquire fresh territories for the Crown—by troops entirely equipped and paid for by themselves, as much as our own were. He believed the Australians would take it as an affront if this House or Her Majesty were in any way to thank them for the military services which they now offered, as if it were a contribution from allies, and not from fellow-subjects. It was in that spirit they had made the

offer, and the enlistment was made in the desire to be part of the Imperial Army, and their pride was now to fight side by side with fellow-subjects in the Soudan. That was a much better kind of Imperial inter-community than any of the vague and impracticable notions that had been thrown out lately about Imperial federation. The relationship between this country and her Colonies had gone down to zero, and was becoming little better than that of Imperial patronage and Colonial dependency. A few years ago we had been taxed at home to the amount of £4,000,000 a-year for Colonial Military Expenditure, to which the Colonies had contributed not a shilling, either for local or general defence. This sort of connection by patronage must have soon gone on from degradation to separation. But this event showed a return of healthier relations, which alone could make connection permanent, relations in which they all alike shared in the burdens as well as privileges of citizenship. Wars were called Imperial, as if the Colonies were not part of the Empire. But they wished to be so. Peace and war were in the breast of the common Sovereign only checked by refusal of Supplies. Their Lordships knew as little of the meaning and intention of the present war as the Australians themselves. They could refuse Supplies, as the House of Commons might, towards it, but in the spirit of common citizenship they had nobly voted them, and the Crown might thank them, as well as the House of Commons. The interests of world-wide commerce were the originating cause of this present war, equally affecting all the British Empire. He wished the Colonial Defence Act of 1865 had more largely drawn out Colonial Naval Service to Her Majesty, as ships of war were furnished a century ago by the Colonies to George III. He cordially joined in the satisfaction expressed in the Motion, but would add a hope that the offered services might not be so soon forgotten as similar former services had been, and that they might take them as services rendered to the Crown in common with those of Her Majesty's subjects at home.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he hoped that it would be understood that on both sides and in every quarter of the House the Motion made by his noble Friend on the Cross Benches was accepted with enthusiasm. That was a Motion which ought to be passed with entire unanimity; and they would only be expressing the feelings of all classes of the community when they gave expression to the sentiments of pleasure to which his noble Friend had referred. He could not but feel somewhat sorry that his noble Friend had thought it right to diverge from the main subject on which they were all agreed to that of the question of a federation of the Empire which his noble Friend behind him had taken up. For himself, he believed that the federation of the Empire was a *fait accompli* now; that what they now witnessed was really the habitual feeling on the part of the Colonies; and that whenever any danger arose to England that sentiment would always come to the front, and would animate all their English-speaking Colonies. He confessed that he was sorry that the noble Earl at the head of the Colonial Office did not accept the services of all the Colonies in a somewhat different manner. It would have made all the difference in the world if all the offers from all the Colonies had been accepted, and if they had been informed that it was merely a question of military expediency when those offers should be made to take effect.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS explained that though he had made a passing allusion to the Federation League he had carefully advoided going into that question at all.

THE EARL OF DERBY: My Lords, I quite agree with the noble Viscount who spoke last (Viscount Bury) that this is a Motion which it is eminently desirable that we should assent to with absolute unanimity, and without the introduction of any controversial matter. It is a Motion to which the Members of the Government can entertain no objection, because it is one approving of the course which they have thought it right to advise Her Majesty to take; and for that very reason it is obviously a Motion which we could not have initiated, its chief importance arising from its being the expression of an entirely independent feeling on the part of the Members of this House. If the Motion had been likely to lead to any discussion of a controversial character, I certainly should not have advised or encouraged the noble Earl on the Cross Benches

(the Earl of Wemyss) to bring it forward, and I think that he himself would have been actuated by the same feeling. Although the Motion is in its terms an expression of approval of the course taken by the Government, I consider that the compliment involved in it to be only in form addressed to us, and to be really intended, as we all understand, for those Colonies whose patriotic and public-spirited offers we are anxious to recognize. We have only had to accept those offers; we have done it willingly, and we have in both Houses of Parliament endeavoured—I myself in your Lordships' House, and the First Lord of the Treasury in the other House in far more eloquent language than any I could command—to give expression to what I believe is the unanimous feeling of every Party and every class in this country—namely, our cordial gratitude for, and admiration of, this display of loyalty and public spirit. This Motion only confirms and emphasizes the language held on the part of Her Majesty's Government. The noble Earl touched very lightly on an expression of regret that somewhat different answers were sent to different Colonies. On a former occasion I explained—and I would explain it again if it were necessary—that that difference in the answers arose simply from the different conditions on which the various offers were made. I do not think it is necessary that I should refer now to what the noble Earl on the Cross Benches said as to the existence of a school whose object is to get rid of the Colonies. I have heard a great deal of denunciation of that school; but having sat for a considerable time in this and in the other House of Parliament and watched the course of opinion on the question, I cannot remember to have heard that sentiment expressed by any person of the slightest importance or consideration. What I know many people did say 30 years ago was that if the more important Colonies which had obtained free institutions should show themselves, as many persons expected they would, unwilling to remain in the Empire, it would not be our duty or our interest to retain them by force; but I never heard anyone in this or the other House of Parliament contend that it was our duty or our interest to turn out of the Empire Colonies which desired to remain connected with it of their own free will. We have seen that the effect of the grant of those free institutions and of leaving those Colonies to manage their own local affairs in their own way has not been, as some predicted it would be, to weaken, but rather to strengthen, the ties between the Colonies and the Mother Country; and I do not believe that there was ever a time when they were more closely connected with or more warmly attached to the Empire than they are at this moment. Neither shall I go into the very interesting and difficult question of federation to which the noble Lord opposite (Lord Norton) alluded. Federation is a word of many meanings, which is used by different speakers in different senses. We have proof of that in what we have heard this evening; and no one who has paid any attention to what has occurred at public meetings can fail to have noticed that when men express their wish for federation on the one hand, or their disbelief in federation on the other, they are talking of quite diffferent things, and that they have no one definite plan before them. If federation means only a voluntary co-operation for purposes of defence—which is the interpretation put on it by the noble Lord opposite—then I agree with him that we have it now, and I hope that we may have it for long. If, on the other hand, it means a system of federal union founded on fixed and settled rules such as those which exist in the case of the United States of America, then I think that we had better wait to discuss propositions of that kind until we have them before us in some practical shape. Expressing my own personal and individual opinion, I do not think that that will be very soon. I will not go into the subject; but an obvious difficulty in the way of any scheme of formal federation lies in the immense disproportion between the number of inhabitants of the British Islands and the number in the Colonies. In these Islands you have a population of some 35,000,000 or 36,000,000, whereas there are only 8,000,000 or 9,000,000 in all the English-speaking Colonies; and if you form an Imperial Council, call it by what name you please, and if in that Council every part of the Empire is to be represented in proportion to its popu-

lation and its importance, the result would be that the Representatives of the British Islands would carry everything their own way, and the Colonists, even if they were united to a man, would be absolutely outvoted and absolutely powerless. If, therefore, such a Body had powers of taxation, I do not say that you would altogether have a system of taxation without representation; but you would have what was practically very nearly the same thing. And, further, with reference to some of the proposals which have been made, with a view of bringing about federation, it is obvious that they could not be carried out without introducing changes in the Constitution as regards the relations between the Executive and the Legislature far wider than any which have yet been attempted in this country. But let me add one proviso. It ought not to be considered that those who do not see their way to any plan of federation are, on that account, indifferent to the extreme importance of consolidating, as far as may be, the various parts of the Empire. But, returning to what is immediately before us, I do not think I ought to sit down without mentioning what more properly belongs to the Department of my noble Friend the Earl of Kimberley)—namely, the loyal assistance which has been offered by several of the Native Princes of India. Such expressions of loyalty and good feeling, on the part of persons situated as they are, are of the highest possible importance, and not merely as a matter of sentiment, but of practical service. I anticipate that your Lordships will, without opposition, accept the Motion of the noble Earl; and when the news is telegraphed out, as it will be, to those distant Provinces which are most concerned, I have no doubt that the mark of respect and gratitude which you have paid to the Colonists will be received by them in the same spirit in which it is offered.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I only rise to confirm the statement of the noble Earl, that, as far as I know, the assent to this Motion is unanimous in every portion of the House. I shall not travel into any of the adventitious and somewhat controversial matters which have gathered round this Motion, and which, I think, were unnecessary to its discussion. I shall not even attempt to emulate the feat of the noble Earl opposite of arguing against a plan which he himself acknowledged was not in existence. All I think it necessary to say is that there has been very strong feeling in this country in response to the exhibition of affectionate sympathy which has reached us from the Colonies; that there is no subject on which this country feels so strongly as their desire that cordial relations of amity and goodwill should exist between them and those of their own race in other parts of Her Majesty's Dominions. That feeling has been eminently gratified by the exhibition of loyalty and patriotism which the Colonists have shown. We are very grateful to the Native Princes of India, as the noble Earl has said, for having also exhibited their affection for the Empire under which they have so long been protected, and to the people who have done their utmost to maintain their interests and promote their welfare. But, of course, we feel still more strongly such indications of good feeling when they come from our own blood—from those who have so lately quitted our own shores. I think the feeling is universal that in acting as they have done the Colonists have shown that they are true Englishmen, and have behaved in a manner worthy of the race from which they have sprung, and the splendid Empire of which they form so important a factor.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS wished to make it clear to their Lordships that he had put the Motion down without consulting any Member of their Lordships' House.

Motion *agreed to, nemine dissentiente.*

Ordered, That the said Address be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

EAST INDIA EXPENSES—MILITARY EXPEDITION TO THE SOUDAN.

RESOLUTION.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY, in rising to move—

"That Her Majesty having directed a military expedition of Her native forces charged upon the revenues of India to be despatched for service in the Soudan and Nubia, this House consents that the ordinary pay of such troops as well as the ordinary charges of any vessels belonging to the Government of India that may be employed in the expedition, which would have been charged upon the revenues of India if such troops or vessels had remained in

that country or seas adjacent, shall continue to be so chargeable; Provided that, if it shall become necessary to replace the troops or vessels so withdrawn by other vessels or native forces, the expense of raising, maintaining, and providing such vessels or forces shall be repaid out of any moneys which may be provided by Parliament for the purposes of the said expedition,"

said: Your Lordships are, no doubt, aware that the small Contingent of Indian troops which has proceeded to Suakin consists practically of three regiments of Infantry and a regiment of Cavalry. That measure was taken at the request of Lord Wolseley, and the reason why we have now to move this Resolution is to be found in the 5th section of the Act "for the Better Government of India," 1858, which requires the consent of both Houses of Parliament before Indian troops can be employed for any other purpose than to prevent or repel actual invasion. The other House has passed a Resolution similar to that which I am about to propose. It has been necessary for us to consider which precedent on this subject we are to follow. The first occasion was that of the war in China in 1839-40. In that case all the ordinary charges were borne by the Government of India, and the extraordinary charges by this country. Then came the war with Persia in 1856, in which the ordinary expenses were borne by the Indian Exchequer, and the extraordinary divided equally between the Indian and the English Exchequers. In the next case —that of the Abyssinian War, which precedent we have followed on this occasion—the whole ordinary charges were borne by India, and the extraordinary by England. In the Expedition to Malta in 1878 the whole of the expenses, ordinary and extraordinary, were borne by the British Exchequer. In the last case—the Expedition to Egypt—the whole of the ordinary expenses were borne by India, and the extraordinary charges were divided between India and this country in the proportion of six to four, India contributing the larger share. The exact effect of following the Abyssinian precedent is that India will stand exactly in the same position as if the troops had never left her shores. England undertakes all the extraordinary expenditure, direct and indirect, so that if it were necessary to replace any of these Forces the expense would fall upon this country. In the case of the war in Abyssinia, I confess I am not able to see what special interest India had; but there is no question that Egypt is a country in which India has a special interest, and the war in the Soudan has arisen directly from the necessity of protecting Egypt. I will merely mention that we have every confidence that, in this as in every other service which they may be called upon to undertake, the Indian troops will well and faithfully and nobly discharge their duty. The regiments which are being sent are all well known. They are the 17th Bengal Infantry, the gallant Sikh Regiment, the 28th Regiment of the Bombay Army, of which General Hardinge speaks in the highest terms, and also the regiment of Bengal Cavalry, the 9th, called Hodson's Horse. Neither is the Madras Army without representation, for it has sent 150 Sappers, who have a high reputation. Although the force is small, there is every reason to suppose that it will be able to render most important and valuable service to the Suakin Expedition.

Moved to resolve—

"That Her Majesty having directed a military expedition of Her native forces charged upon the revenues of India to be despatched for service in the Soudan and Nubia, this House consents that the ordinary pay of such troops as well as the ordinary charges of any vessels belonging to the Government of India that may be employed in the expedition, which would have been charged upon the revenues of India if such troops or vessels had remained in that country or seas adjacent, shall continue to be so chargeable: Provided that, if it shall become necessary to replace the troops or vessels so withdrawn by other vessels or native forces, the expense of raising, maintaining, and providing such vessels or forces shall be repaid out of any moneys which may be provided by Parliament for the purposes of the said expedition."—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

LORD NAPIER OF MAGDALA said, it appeared to him that the proposed arrangement was eminently just and fair. Those who advised the Government of India to reduce the Indian Army below the strength which the most experienced officers considered necessary for its defence relied on being able to demand immediate assistance from England on any danger arising in India; and it was only just and fair that India should return that assistance when necessary.

Motion *agreed to.*

EDUCATIONAL ENDOWMENTS (IRELAND) BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to reorganise the educational endowments of Ireland—Was *presented* by The LORD PRESIDENT, read 1° (No. 44)

House adjourned at a quarter past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 16*th March*, 1885.

MINUTES.]—NEW MEMBER SWORN—Thomas Russell, esquire, *for* Glasgow City.

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—NAVY ESTIMATES, CIVIL SERVICES—CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS, CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS—£3,633,650, VOTE ON ACCOUNT, CIVIL SERVICE EXCHEQUER.

PUBLIC BILL—*Second Reading*—Local Authorities (Expenses of Conferences)* [88].

QUESTIONS.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—ARKLOW BREAKWATER.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, If he has received the special report called for on the subject of Arklow Breakwater, the foundations of which have given way, and whether he can state its purport; whether it is the fact that the grant of £15,000 and loan of £20,000 barely cover the contract and purchase-money paid to the Wicklow Copper Mining Company for their interests in the harbour; whether he can now give any estimate of the probable cost for extra work consequent on the failure; whether the ratepayers who guaranteed repayment of the loan, and who, through their representatives, condemned the plans of the Board of Works from the first, can now be held responsible or be called on to pay anything outside the amount guaranteed; and, whether the Government will fulfil their part by completing the harbour works in a satisfactory manner without further cost to the ratepayers?

MR. HIBBERT: This matter is still under inquiry, and, pending the receipt of a definite Report, which will be made as soon as possible, it would be premature to make any comment on the specific statements and Questions of the hon. Member. I can only assure him that the subject shall have my best attention.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—HORSES FOR OFFICERS.

MR. CORRY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the privilege of keeping a private horse, or otherwise, which was granted some years ago to the resident magistracy, will now be extended to the officers of the Royal Irish Constabulary?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not quite understand the Question of the hon. Gentleman. The officers of the Royal Irish Constabulary are, and have been for many years, required to keep a private horse, for which they draw forage allowance.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS—CLOONCLARE DISTRICT, CO. LEITRIM.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in the extensive parish of Cloonclare (county Leitrim), within which are held the Petty Session Courts of Manorhamilton and Kiltyclogher, there is only one resident magistrate, Mr. Algeo, and whether Mr. Algeo is now prevented by old age and feeble health from discharging magisterial duty, and the business of the Courts of Manorhamilton and Kiltyclogher is left to depend upon the casual attendance of justices living outside those districts; whether three resident gentlemen, Mr. Michael Maguire, Mr. Laurence M'Dermott, and Mr. John M'Grimes, junior, have been recommended by Catholic clergymen, Poor Law Guardians, ratepayers, and others in North Leitrim, for appointment to the Commission of the Peace, and whether the Lord Chancellor will appoint them; whether Mr. Thomas Corcadden, of Hollymount, has been recommended; and, if so, by whom; whether his position is that of tenant of grass farms; whether he has been continually under police protection for a long time past; and, whether there is any intention to appoint him?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I find that 20 Petty Sessions were appointed to be held in this district in the six months to the 31st December last, and that only one fell through for want of magistrates. Mr. Algeo attended 13 of these. He is the only local magistrate who attends at Kiltyclogher; but there are four others who attend at Manorhamilton. The names of the gentlemen mentioned have been before the Lord Chancellor and the Lieutenant of the county; but it has not been found possible to appoint them. Mr. Corscadden, who has a property of close on £600 a-year, has been appointed on the recommendation of the Lieutenant of the county. He had been under police protection; but it was withdrawn, at his own request, in August last.

NAVY—WIDOWS AND ORPHANS OF WARRANT OFFICERS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether the Board will now consider the question of compassionate allowances to the widows and orphans of Warrant Officers who have not died on active service?

MR. CAINE (who replied) said: The widows of warrant officers who do not die from the effects of injuries received on duty receive pensions of £25 a-year. It is not proposed to alter these pensions, or to make special provision for children.

NAVY—NAVAL PENSIONERS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is intended to give to Naval Pensioners employed on the Permanent Staff of the Steam Reserve, and to Non-Commissioned Officers and men of the Royal Marines, employed on the Permanent Staff of the Auxiliary Forces, the advantages now accorded to Army Pensioners on the Permanent Staff?

MR. CAINE (who replied) said: It is not intended to give pensioners employed in the Steam Reserve any additional pension for such service. The system on which pensions are given in the Navy is not analogous to that in force in the Army. Marine pensioners employed on the permanent Staff of the Auxiliary Forces will receive the same rate of extra pension as is accorded to Army pensioners.

SCOTLAND—INSPECTION OF RIVERS UNDER "THE RIVERS POLLUTION PREVENTION ACT, 1876."

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT asked the Secretary to the Local Government Board, Whether there is at present in Scotland any Inspector of Rivers under "The Rivers Pollution Prevention Act, 1876;" and, if not, when it is intended to appoint one?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR), in reply, said there had been an Inspector of Rivers; but he understood his appointment was not to be renewed. The proper method of making the inspection of rivers in Scotland was at present under consideration.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH STATION AT LEITRIM.

COLONEL O'BEIRNE asked the Postmaster General, If the Post Office authorities have as yet decided to establish a telegraph station in the town of Leitrim, taking into consideration the fact that twelve fairs are held annually in that town, and that a most influential memorial calling the attention of the Post Office authorities to this subject, and signed by the entire of the Leitrim Grand Jury, and by traders, farmers, and cattle dealers, was forwarded, several weeks ago, to the Post Office authorities?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The Memorial alluded to by the hon. Member, which was addressed to the Acting Secretary of the Post Office in Dublin, did not reach his hands until the 2nd instant. Inquiries are being made on the subject of the Memorial, and as soon as they are completed I will look into the matter, and see whether it is possible to meet the wishes of the Memorialists.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—INADEQUATE SENTENCE—CASE OF CHARLES FOSTER, LEEDS ASSIZES.

MR. BARRAN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to a prosecution conducted on behalf of the Treasury at the Leeds Assizes in November last before Mr. Baron Pollock, when Charles Foster pleaded guilty to charges of forgery under aggravated circumstances, in reference to two sums of £12,000 and £3,000, and was sentenced by the learned judge to two months' imprison-

ment without hard labour; and, whether the existing Law is adequate to deal with so grave an offence, or if he is aware of any circumstances, in Law or otherwise, which would account for the light character of the sentence?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, the Crown had the power of remitting a sentence which might appear to be excessive; but it had no power to make a sentence more severe. All he could say was that the ordinary law was quite sufficient for the punishment of offences of this character.

MOROCCO—FRAUDULENT CLAIMS OF BRITISH SUBJECTS AGAINST NATIVES.

MR W. J CORBET asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with reference to the inquiry made into the alleged fraudulent claims of British subjects against Natives of Morocco, and the assurance he gave, in November last, that the matter would not be allowed to drop, Whether he will lay Mr. Payton's Report of the Casablanca investigation upon the Table of the House?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Mr. Consul Payton reported on the conduct of a Consular official for the information of the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State, on receipt of the Report, discharged the official concerned; but it is not a public document, and could not properly be laid on the Table.

MOROCCO—JUDICIAL CRUELTIES.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If his attention has been called to a statement in *The Globe* of 17th February that, on a charge of having stolen a bullock, a man's eyes were cut out by order of one of the local authorities in Morocco; and, will Her Majesty's Government continue to protect the Sultan of Morocco from Foreign aggression without insisting on the reform of his administration?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have no official information of such an outrage having been committed; but Her Majesty's Minister will be instructed to report upon the facts of the case Her Majesty's Representative at Tangiers exerts all the influence which he can bring to bear to prevent abuses in the administration of Morocco, and to promote reform.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—CHELTENHAM MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the action of the Town Council of Cheltenham in electing, on 2nd February last, to the office of Medical Officer of Health of that town a gentleman who at the time of his appointment did not possess all the qualifications required under the Orders of the Local Government Board with respect to the appointment and duties of such officers, Section 1, Article 1; whether, in contravention of the said orders, Section 2, Article 4, a notification of the said appointment, instead of being made to the Local Government Board within seven days, was delayed until the 25th of February, by which time the gentleman elected had furnished himself with the qualification of which he was deficient at the time of his election; and, what steps the Local Government Board propose to take in the matter?

MR GEORGE RUSSELL, who replied, said: It appears that the Town Council of Cheltenham, last month, appointed to the office of Medical Officer of Health a gentleman who at that time possessed a surgical qualification only. He had since obtained a medical qualification The appointment was not reported to the Board within the time required by the regulations. The Board have asked for particulars as to the appointment; but I may state that, seeing that the gentleman elected has now both a medical and a surgical qualification, the Board would not regard the fact that at the time of election he had one qualification only as being in itself a sufficient ground for withholding their sanction to the appointment.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—THE CAMEROONS

MR. BARRAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the statement contained in the Central News telegram from Berlin, published in *The Globe* newspaper on Wednesday, March 11th, relating to proposed cessions to Germany at the Cameroons and Victoria, is correct; and, if the result of

such cessions will not involve the relinquishment of the British claim to the Cameroons Mountain, and the environment of the Settlement of Victoria by German territory; and, whether the town of Bota is also to be ceded to Germany, this town being part of the district belonging to the Baptist Missionary Society, purchased from King William, of Bimbia, forty years ago by the said Society?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Negotiations for a friendly understanding between England and Germany as to their respective Protectorates in the Niger and Cameroons Districts are pending, but not concluded. Whatever may be the result, proved rights of private persons will be respected. But this is only one portion of the general scheme, by which it is hoped that all the questions which have been under discussion between the two Governments as to West and East Africa and the South Pacific may be settled by mutual concessions. The details will be laid before Parliament as soon as the negotiations are sufficiently advanced.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—CATTLE DISEASE (IRELAND).

MR. CLARE READ asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the number of cattle reported to be attacked with pleuro-pneumonia in the North and South Dublin and Rathdown Unions in January and February 1885; the number of cattle so affected in the rest of Ireland, and in England and in Scotland during those months; and, seeing the large export of store cattle that is carried on through the port of Dublin, if some more stringent and successful measures cannot be taken to eradicate that fatal disease from the cowhouses of that city?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The subject referred to in this Question is one of such importance that I think I shall be justified in going into some detail in answering it. It appears that in the month of January last the number of cattle reported to be attacked with pleuro-pneumonia in the North and South Dublin and Rathdown Unions was 138, and in February 166, or a total of 304. In the rest of Ireland during that time there were only nine cattle reported to be attacked—namely, two in January and seven in February. In the same period in England and Scotland the numbers were, for January, 89; for February, 56—a total of 145. The prevalence of this disease in the Dublin dairy-yards has been engaging the careful attention of Lord Spencer, and some time ago he directed that such members of the Veterinary Staff as could be spared for the purpose should devote their special attention to the state of disease and the working of the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act in the Dublin Unions. Accordingly, since the beginning of February last, four, and sometimes five, Government Veterinary Inspectors have been occupied in making careful examination of the cattle in the dairy-yards of the city and suburbs, and have detected a considerable number of cases of disease. They have also obtained several convictions against persons for failure to report disease in proper time, and for other offences of the kind. Furthermore, an Order in Council has been passed to enable diseased cattle to be removed for slaughter in properly constructed vans to a specified slaughter-house, instead of having the slaughter carried out in the dairy-yard; and one locality, containing a number of dairy-yards in which disease has been prevalent, was, on the 9th instant, declared to be an infected area. All infected places declared by the local authorities are placed under the supervision of police, and the number of cattle thereon is carefully checked. The infected places are visited by Government Inspectors as often as practicable; and it is hoped that the efforts which are being made will result in a material diminution of the disease in the Unions named.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he cannot now state what provisions in the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) Bill the Government and the Leaders of the Opposition regard as vital, and thereby obviate debate on points that cannot be conceded without destroying the measure?

MR. SERJEANT SIMON asked, Whether, considering the number of Amendments on the Paper, relating to the

changes in the names of the electoral districts, the Government did not consider that it would tend to shorten the passage of the Bill, if one or two Gentlemen from each Front Bench were to meet and determine what alterations should be made?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: In reply to the last Question, the names excite so much interest that the House would hardly be willing to trust any Members with the final settlement of the subject; and I fear we shall have to discuss the names in the House. Still, I should hope that, on the earlier names, we might arrive at something like general principles. In reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen), I have to say that the answer of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister—that it is unusual to state in advance what points in the measure are vital—is, I fear, the only reply which I can make. It is the intention of the Government to ask the House to adhere closely to the Bill as proposed, except where its provisions are departed from by general consent.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—THE FAMINE IN ZULULAND.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Sir Henry Bulwer, Governor of Natal, has taken any steps to relieve the famine now prevailing in Zululand; and, what is the most recent information on the subject which Her Majesty's Government have received from His Excellency?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: Sir, the only information on the point that we have received from Sir Henry Bulwer relates to the state of distress in the Reserve Territory, mainly owing to the influx of refugees from Zululand proper. Instructions were given to the Sub-Commissioner in the district, to provide for a distribution of mealies to those who, on inquiry, might be found to be in need of relief.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—THE DUBLIN POLICE AND CLUBS.

MR O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the police ever visit those clubs in Dublin which had connected with them men who were convicted for card-sharping and betting; and, whether it is a fact that the only time the police were ever known to enter any of those betting clubs was on one occasion when they were called in to arrest one of the parties for stealing a watch?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Sir, the police frequently visit each one of these clubs. They are not aware that any of the members of the clubs were ever convicted of card-sharping. On one occasion a member of one of the clubs called for and obtained the assistance of a detective to arrest a member of the same club for the alleged larceny of a watch. The case proved to be one of unlawful detention without criminal intent, and the magistrate before whom it came dismissed it.

MR. BIGGAR: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the police have ever visited the Stephen's Green Club, where a large amount of gambling goes on nightly?

[No reply.]

ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC—THE SOCIETY ISLANDS.

MR. GORST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, by a Convention of 1847, the Government of France entered into an engagement formally to acknowledge the independence of Raiatea and other of the Society Islands, and never to take possession of the said Islands, either absolutely or under the title of a Protectorate, or in any form whatever; whether, notwithstanding this Convention, the French flag has been hoisted at Raiatea; at what date this infraction of the Convention took place; and, what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken to secure the due observance of the Convention of 1847 on the part of the French Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Sir, the declaration of 1847 is to the effect stated by the hon. and learned Member. The French flag was hoisted over one of the Islands of the group called Raiatea by a French Naval Commander without the authority of his Government. The incident occurred in 1880. Representations were at once addressed to the French Government, who disavowed the act of their naval officer, but requested that their flag should be allowed to remain temporarily hoisted at Raiatea pending negotiations which had com-

menced in relation to the declaration. This request was acceded to, and the provisional maintenance of the French flag at Raiatea has been periodically renewed during the negotiations which have been carried on with a good prospect of success.

MR. GORST: Am I right in concluding that the French flag has been flying at Raiatea from 1880 to the present time—that is to say, about five years?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes; that is so.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND) — THE IRISH CIRCUITS.

MR. GIBSON asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Is there any objection to laying upon the Table a Copy of the Report of the Committee of the Irish Judges on the subject of the Irish Circuits?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER), in reply, said, that there would be no objection.

NAVY—THE ROYAL NAVAL HOSPITAL, STONEHOUSE.

MR. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he is aware that the nurses at the Royal Naval Hospital, Stonehouse (Devon), are often obliged to work nineteen hours a-day (even on Sunday) without remuneration for extra time; and, if he will take steps to stop these protracted hours and limit them to the time for which the nurses stipulated to serve?

MR. CAINE (who replied) said: At Plymouth Hospital the nurses are on duty 15 hours a-day—that is, from 6 A.M. to 9 P.M., and when on ordinary night duty, which is three times a-week on an average, have a watch of four hours in addition, without payment for "extra time," so called, except when looking after critical cases, when they get an allowance of 1*s.* a-night. There are no stipulated hours of duty. Leave is granted for one day a-week and alternate Sundays.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—GOREY PETTY SESSIONS.

MR. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the population of the Petty Sessions district of Gorey, county Wexford, is principally Catholic; whether all the magistrates attending Gorey Petty Sessions are Protestants; whether he can state what qualifications the two most recently appointed magistrates, Messrs. Turner and Hore, had, and whether one of them has any experience or training except that to be obtained from an insurance and rent office; and, whether there are several Catholic gentlemen in the district perfectly qualified to act as magistrates, and why they have been passed over?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The population of the Gorey district is principally Roman Catholic. I understand the magistrates who attend Petty Sessions there are Protestants. Colonel Hore, who owns a property of £350 a-year, was made a magistrate by the late Lord Chancellor on the recommendation of Lord Maurice Fitzgerald. Mr. Turner, who is agent to a large landowner in the county, was appointed by the present Lord Chancellor on the same recommendation. No such names as those referred to in the last paragraph of the Question have ever been before the present Lord Chancellor.

VOTES OF THANKS—THE CAMPAIGN IN THE SOUDAN.

SIR JOHN HAY asked the Secretary of State for War, If his attention has been directed to Votes of Thanks to officers and men who have gained victories in former wars; whether thanks were not voted for Barossa, Meeanee, the Alma, and on other occasions, without waiting for the conclusion of the campaign; and, whether, having regard to these precedents, Her Majesty's Ministers will take an early opportunity of expressing the gratitude of the House to the brave men who fought at El Teb, Tamai, Abu Klea, Gubat, and Kirbekan?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir; the statements made in the Question of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman are quite correct, and my attention has been called to them. At the same time, there are precedents, as I pointed out last year, pointing in a somewhat opposite direction. I think I can only repeat the answer I gave the other day—namely, that we consider, in the present state of things, it would be somewhat premature to discuss the question, but that the Government are ready to give it their best consideration,

and will endeavour to act on the precedents dealing with the subject.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Sir BERNHARD SAMUELSON asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he has considered and is prepared to act on the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Technical Instruction in reference to Elementary Education, and more especially the recommendation that linear drawing should be one of the subjects required to be taught in Elementary Schools, as being essential to the education of artizans?

Mr. BROADHURST asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council, Whether he will endeavour to make provision in the New Code for more efficient instruction in drawing and modelling?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, the whole of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Technical Instruction have been for some time past under our consideration; but we feel that it is important that those which apply to elementary schools should be first dealt with, in order that the scholars may be able, when they leave school, to avail themselves of the facilities for technical instruction offered by the Science and Art Department, the City Guilds, and other public Bodies. The recommendations as to drawing in elementary schools are now receiving special attention, and I hope very soon to be able to lay our proposals before the House. With respect to modelling in elementary schools, we are not prepared to go on with it at present, as we are watching an interesting experiment which is now going on at Burslem, on the success of which our decision will somewhat depend.

FRANCE AND CHINA — INTERNATIONAL LAW — SEIZURE OF THE STEAMSHIP "GLENROY."

Mr. SUTHERLAND asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he has been informed that the British steamship *Glenroy* has been detained by a French man of war at some distance from Shanghai, and subjected to search, in consequence of (as reported by Lloyd's) having on board a certain quantity of lead, which is, and always has been, a regular article of export from this Country to China; and, if any intimation has been received from the French Government declaring lead, or other ordinary merchandise, as contraband of war; and, if so, whether he will state, for the guidance of shipowners, the view adopted by Her Majesty's Government on this subject?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Her Majesty's Government have received a telegram from the Governor of Hong Kong to the effect that the British steamer *Glenroy* had been detained by a French man-of-war, on the 11th instant, between Hong Kong and Shanghai, in consequence of her having on board, as part of her cargo, a shipment of lead, which the French Commander treated as contraband of war. Information has since been received of the release of the *Glenroy*, the lead having been placed at the disposal of the French authorities. No intimation has been received from the French Government declaring lead or any other merchandise, except rice, contraband of war. Her Majesty's Government have protested against rice being treated generally as contraband of war; but the legality of seizures by belligerents of articles alleged to be contraband of war is a question to be decided, in the first instance, by the competent Prize Court. In the present case, Her Majesty's Government are informed that lead is one of the most common and necessary articles of commerce shipped to China at this season, and is used for making linings for boxes of tea. Having regard, therefore, to the assurances given by the French Government that their right of search would be exercised with forbearance and consideration for the commerce of neutrals, Her Majesty's Government trust that the representations which they propose to make respecting this seizure will result in the release of this shipment.

THE DYNAMITE EXPLOSIONS — REWARDS TO CONSTABLES.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of the rewards bestowed upon Constables Cole and Cox for their gallant conduct during the recent dynamite explosions, he proposes also to recognize the conduct of Constable King, who, on the night of the explosion at Scotland Yard, re-

moved the dynamite, at great personal risk, from the base of Nelson's Column?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, there was no intention to do so. The circumstances of the cases were wholly dissimilar.

NAVY—SHIPS FITTED WITH THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What ships we have at Suakin fitted with the electric light, with a view to its being utilised to assist the outposts on dark nights against the stealthy attacks of the Arabs, who are making nightly raids on the camp, and have, on more than one occasion, inflicted injury on the troops; and, whether, on former occasions, the electric light has been found of the greatest use in protecting the outposts from attack?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY, in reply, said, that some of the ships at Suakin were fitted with the electric light, and it had been in use for some time past.

POOR LAW (IRELAND) — QUALIFICATIONS—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS —MR. M. KILKELLY, ATHLONE.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that, at the last Parliamentary revision, Mr. Michael Kilkelly, of Athlone, was objected to by the Conservatives on the ground that he held his premises jointly with several members of his family; whether it is true that the revising barrister disallowed the objection; whether Mr. Kilkelly has been nominated for Poor Law Guardian in Athlone Union; whether the Conservatives have raised the same objection to his qualification that they did before the revising barrister; and, what answer the returning officer intends to give?

MR. LEWIS: I rise to a point of Order. I wish to submit to you, Sir, that the Question is altogether out of Order. It relates to no public matter whatsoever, but refers merely to the claim of a private individual to be placed upon the Parliamentary Register as a voter; to the decision given by the Revising Barrister; and to a further claim made on behalf of the same gentleman to be appointed a Poor Law Guardian. If such a Question is in Order, I fail to see what Question can be held to be irregular.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I also rise to a point of Order. I wish to ask, Sir, whether the hon. Gentleman, in asking you to give a decision on a point of Order, is at liberty to express his own opinion upon the matter?

MR. LEWIS: I am submitting to you, Sir, as a point of Order, that this is simply a Question asking whether the qualification of a certain private individual has been objected to, and what course the Returning Officer intends to take in the matter? I maintain that such a Question violates everything in the nature of decency and Order.

MR. SPEAKER: I must certainly acknowledge that the last paragraph of the Question cannot come within the limits of a proper Question to a Minister of the Crown. It asks "what answer the Returning Officer intends to give;" and I must rule that that portion of the Question is irregular, and cannot be put.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY: Then I will put the Question down to the last line, which, after your ruling, Sir, I will omit.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Well, Sir, the last line is, I think, the only part of the Question I very much care to answer. The facts of the case are these. Mr. Kilkelly's nomination as a Poor Law Guardian has been before the Local Government Board, and they have advised that it should be allowed, which has accordingly been done.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN BOUNDARY.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the important letter from *The Times* Correspondent with Sir Peter Lumsden's Mission in Afghanistan, which appeared in that paper on the 3rd March, and especially to the following extracts:—

"I have pointed out the great strategical importance of Pul-i-Khatun, a place which has always been considered Afghan, and beyond the pale of discussion. Another important position is Penjdeh, in the Valley of the Murghab. Its inhabitants have always been subject to Afghanistan, and it is occupied by an Afghan garrison. Russia does not desire the definition of the Afghan frontier, for it will put an end to her successful system of stealthy encroachment. . . . . Three years ago the nearest Russian

outposts on the road from the Caspian were at Krasnovodsk and Chikislar, 700 miles from Herat; now they are at Pul-i-Khatun, only 150 miles from Herat. Three years ago the nearest Russian outposts on the road from the Oxus and Merv were at Katra Kurghan, say 500 miles from Herat; now they are at Yolatan, 140 miles from Herat. Nearly all this progress has been made by unopposed encroachments since we evacuated Kandahar."

whether it is true that the Russian troops have occupied Zulfagar, 40 miles south of Pul-i-Khatun, Ak-Rabat, and Penjdeh (all four places being on Afghan territory; whether any further advance has been recently made beyond these places, and where Sir Peter Lumsden's force is now stationed; and, whether he can now, consistently with the public interest, state that Her Majesty's Ministers intend to protect the absolute integrity of all Afghan territory, including these important positions, from Russian occupation and influence, in accordance with their own pledges and those of the Czar's Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I have seen the letter referred to. The Russians have occupied Pul-i-Khatun and Ak-Rabat; but Penjdeh is held by the Afghans. We have not heard of any further advance being made beyond the places above mentioned. It would not be for the public interest that I should make any statement such as that suggested by the hon. Member.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Board of Works are in a position to furnish a Return, showing in respect of each of the larger rivers in Ireland—the area of the Catchment basin; the average rainfall in each; the estimated per-centage of evaporation, having regard to soil and inclination; the discharge capacity at the mouth; the capacity requisite to discharge the rainfall minus evaporation?

MR. HIBBERT: Sir, I regret to find that there is no such information in possession of the Board of Works as would enable me to give any useful reply to this Question. At the same time, I admit that the information, if obtained, would be both interesting and useful; but as it would be difficult to give a satisfactory Return, except after a considerable lapse of time, and at great expense, I trust that the hon. Member will not press for it.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—THE WEST OF ENGLAND BANK.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he can take any steps to bring to an early conclusion the process of liquidation of the affairs of the West of England Bank, the proceedings in whose case have now been pending for several years?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that the provisions of the Bankruptcy Act of 1883 did not apply to the liquidation of Companies, and that the Department of the Board of Trade had no knowledge of, neither had they the power to interfere in, the matter.

ARMY—DEFENCE OF MILITARY AND NAVAL STATIONS.

MR. W. H. SMITH asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is his intention to make any proposals to the House for improvements in the seaward defences of Portsmouth, Plymouth, Malta, and Gibraltar, which are stated, on the authority of the First Lord of the Admiralty, to have been under his consideration for some months past?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: It will, probably, be more convenient to state fully the views of the Government upon the subject of the defences of the military and naval stations at home and abroad when the Annual Statement on the Army Estimates is made. I may state, however, in reply to the right hon. Gentleman, that a certain limited amount has been annually devoted to the improvement of the defences of the military ports; and we have recently, as stated by the First Lord of the Admiralty, had under our consideration proposals for providing for their more rapid completion. It is necessary, however, to look at the question of the defences of the Empire as a whole; and the protection of some of the Colonial coaling stations is considered, at present, to be the most urgent service. Having regard to the heavy demand on the War Department for armaments for the Navy and for the coaling stations, it is not probable that we shall make any large proposals for the military ports in the present Session.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he would give Notice to call attention to the subject on going into Committee.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—EMBODIMENT OF THE MILITIA.

MR. SIDNEY HERBERT asked the Secretary of State for War, If he can inform the House how long the battalions of Militia now called up will be embodied, or if it is his intention to embody other battalions of the same regiments after those now called up have gone through a course of training?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: It is not intended to embody Militia battalions of the same regiment in succession. Considerable expense and inconvenience are involved in embodying and disembodying Militia battalions.

ARMY—ROYAL MILITARY ACADEMY, WOOLWICH—MEALS OF CADETS.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he will have any objection to quote from or lay upon the Table any Report from the Medical Officers who have recommended that so long an interval as from 7·55 A.M. for breakfast to 2·15 P.M. for luncheon is an improvement on previous arrangements for the gentlemen cadets at Woolwich; and, on what authority he states that the cadets approve of the abolition of their two intermediate meals, and of the present arrangement?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In their last Report the Board of Visitors strongly recommended a change in the mode of living of the cadets at the Royal Military Academy; and the Governor informs me that the medical officer himself fixed the hours of which the hon. Member complains. The new arrangements have been made solely in the interests of the health of the cadets. I will make inquiries whether the intervals between the meals cannot be lessened without seriously interfering with the scheme of daily studies. My authorities for the statement that the cadets prefer the new arrangement are the Governor and the Adjutant of the Academy.

INDIA—THE BENGAL TENANCY BILL.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Mr. Mookerjea, Native Member of the Viceroy of India's Council, subsequently to the introduction last month of the Bengal Tenancy Bill, moved for a delay of three weeks to permit of the Bill being published in the vernacular Gautee; whether this Motion was negatived; whether Mr. Mookerjea then moved for delay of three weeks to give interested parties time to study altered Bill; whether Sir Steuart Bayley, on behalf of the Government, said that "he thought three weeks' delay would mean one year's delay;" and, whether this signified that during that time the annual exodus to Simla must take place?

MR. J. K. CROSS asked what the hon. Baronet meant by "vernacular Gautee?" He apprehended it must be a misprint, otherwise he could not understand what it meant.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, he presumed it was a word in the vernacular dialect of Bengal.

MR. J. K. CROSS: I presume it really means *The Vernacular Gazette*, and I am told that there is no such vernacular as Gautee. In answer to the Question of the hon. Member, I have to say the debate in the Legislative Council on the Bengal Tenancy Bill, as reported by the Select Committee, began on the 27th ultimo. The last proceedings of the Legislative Council which have been received are dated 14th ultimo. The hon. Baronet will therefore see that I am unable to answer his Question.

MR. GORST asked, when the Returns he moved for last Session as to the cost of the annual exodus would be laid on the Table?

MR. J. K. CROSS, in reply, said, he would be able to give a definite answer shortly. They had the Returns for three years; but they were not consecutive, and he had asked the Indian Government to complete them before laying them on the Table of the House.

MR. ONSLOW, in reference to the last part of the Question, asked, whether it was not the fact that the Viceroy, instead of going to Simla, was going to attend a most important gathering at Rawul Pindi?

MR. J. K. CROSS: Yes, Sir.

CENTRAL ASIA—ENGLAND AND RUSSIA—THE NEGOTIATIONS.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What is the date of the new

agreement between the British and Russian Governments; whether any advance of the Russian troops has taken place since the date of that agreement; and, whether this agreement in any way recognizes that Penjdeh, Ak-Rabat, and Zulfagar, are on debateable territory?

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can now state the date of the agreement recently entered into between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Russia as to the occupation of the position at present taken up by their respective Forces?

MR GLADSTONE: My answer to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth is this. First of all, I had better remind the House that on Friday I stated—

"That it had been agreed between Russia and England that no further advances should be sanctioned on either side."

I spoke then on the strength of communications from St. Petersburg, and the latest of those to which I referred was a telegram from the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, dated the 5th of March. On Saturday, in order to obviate any possible misapprehension—that having been a telegram from the British Ambassador—Lord Granville sent to St. Petersburg, to Sir Edward Thornton, a telegram containing the words I have quoted, referring to the assurances that had been exchanged between the two Governments. Earl Granville then desired the British Ambassador to ascertain whether M. de Giers agreed that the assurances referred to constituted an agreement to the effect stated by me. To that telegram I have no doubt we shall shortly have an answer; and, in the meantime, it would, perhaps, be wise of me to go no further than to give the date, which I have done. Then the hon. Member asks me whether the agreement—though the word "agreement" is a little fallacious—arrangement I should prefer to call it—includes the position occupied by the Afghan Forces; and, if so, whether it has received the adhesion of the Ameer? Inasmuch as we cannot command the movements of the Afghan Forces in the same manner as the Emperor of Russia could command his, the expression we used was, that "further advances would not have our sanction." The whole arrangement certainly did, in our intention, include the positions occupied by the Afghan Forces. It was not, however, possible to obtain for it the adhesion of the Ameer, on account of the time it would take; and it was thought desirable that such an arrangement should be put into operation as soon as possible, while it would require a considerable time to communicate with the Ameer in order to obtain his cohesion. What we did was to urge upon the Afghan Forces not to make further advances; and that was the reason why we did not think fit to keep an arrangement of that kind in abeyance till we could communicate with the Ameer.

MR. BOURKE: Are we to understand that until the Government receive an answer from St. Petersburg this agreement does not really exist, or has not been assented to by the Russian Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: What I stated was that we conceived the arrangement had been assented to on both sides; but that, for fear that some "further advances" might take place owing to some ambiguity, and in order to ascertain that there is an identity of view on the points I have named—although as to that I have no apprehension as far as the substance is concerned—Lord Granville has sent that telegraphic message. I have no doubt that I shall soon be able to communicate the substance of the reply to the House.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the last two paragraphs of his Question—namely—

"Whether any advance of the Russian troops had taken place since the date of that agreement, and, whether this agreement in any way recognized that Penjdeh, Ak-Rabat, and Zulfagar were on debateable territory?"

MR. GLADSTONE said, that he did not think it desirable to reply to the particulars of the hon. Member's Question at that present moment.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it would be possible to lay upon the Table the despatch of March 5?

MR. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; most certainly not. It would be very unusual, and I think most decidedly against

the public interest, to pick out a particular telegram in the course of a Correspondence for publication.

MR. GORST asked whether the telegram to St. Petersburg had been sent subsequent to the statement of the Prime Minister?

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; I thought I had said so. My statement was made in this House on Friday, and the telegram was sent on Saturday.

MR. CHAPLIN: I wish to ask one further Question of the Prime Minister, in regard to his reply to the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff), in order to clear up a point which seems to me to be doubtful. Are we to understand that it is quite clear that it is not open to Russia to depart from the agreement, or rather what now appears to be the unconfirmed arrangement, which has been referred to until the reply to Lord Granville's telegram has been received?

MR. GLADSTONE: The object of Lord Granville's telegram is not to make a new arrangement. It is simply to insure perfect accuracy as to our understanding of the arrangement which now exists.

MR. E. STANHOPE gave Notice that tomorrow he would ask the Prime Minister whether his attention had been called to the statement made by the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the Autumn, that we had requested the Russian Government to withdraw from the positions they had occupied in the neighbourhood of Afghanistan; whether any answer had been received to that communication; and, if the Russians had withdrawn from the positions referred to?

POLICE (METROPOLIS)—WANDSWORTH POLICE COURT.

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in view of the acknowledged inadequacy of the accommodation provided for the Wandsworth Police Court and its defective condition, he will use his authority to prevent the continuance of this grievance?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had undertaken to give his attention to the subject of the accommodation at this Court, in conjunction with the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

ENFRANCHISEMENT OF LEASEHOLDERS BILL.

MR. BROADHURST asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in the event of his agreeing to give a day for the Motion of the honourable Member for Cardiff, he will, at the same time, name a day for the Debate for the Second Reading of the Bill for the Enfranchisement of Leaseholders, which stood first on the Order Paper on the 4th March, and which lost its favourable position on that occasion through the pressure of Government business?

MR. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, there was no day that could be given for the purpose of forwarding this Bill.

PUBLIC HEALTH—PATENT MEDICINES.

MR. PULESTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether his attention has been called to the following, from an article in *The Lancet*, viz.:—

"Scarcely a day passes without the record in the papers of an inquest on some poor deluded victim who has been sent to his last account from an over-weening confidence in one or other of the much-belauded patent medicines. The facility afforded for obtaining a narcotic, whether it be in the form of opium, morphia, or the deadly chloral, is a consideration which cannot be overlooked. In no other country can poisons be purchased wholesale without a strict inquiry as to the purpose for which they are required; but in England they are sold openly, and without restriction, under the guise of patent medicines;"

and, whether, having reference to the proposed legislation on this subject, he will cause inquiry to be made, with a view to obviating the evils arising from such a condition of things if they are shown to be as stated?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I am afraid, Sir, that, considering the very large number of Notices on this subject in both directions which have appeared in medical and other newspapers, it is quite out of my power to give an opinion on any particular observation contained in them. I do not even know when the article to which the hon. Member refers appeared, and the Question gives no date. I have already stated that the whole question has been the subject of careful inquiry, and that legislation will be proposed either in this or next Session.

EGYPT FINANCE, &c.

Mr. BOURKE said, he wished to ask the Government a Question with regard to the arrangements for the settlement of Egyptian Finance. Information had reached him to the effect that the Agreement was to be signed to-morrow, and he would be glad to know if that was the case; and, if so, whether Papers would immediately be laid on the Table upon the subject?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I think I can give an answer to that at once. I dislike to repeat the answer I have already made, but it does appear to me to be very near its close; at any rate, I can give the House this satisfaction, that the Papers are now in the course of preparation with all possible rapidity. They are delayed by nothing except the necessity, with which the right hon Gentleman is familiar, of communicating with Foreign Ministers as to certain reports of their conversations contained in them. These Papers are in the course of preparation with all the rapidity that the Foreign Office by its exertions can possibly command, and will be laid on the Table without delay, I think I may say, whatever happens.

PUBLIC OFFICES THE TREASURY—MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE.

Mr. MACARTNEY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the junior Member for Leeds (Mr. Herbert Gladstone), who, it is understood, had accepted office as Junior Lord of the Treasury without salary some years ago, is now in receipt of a salary from the Treasury?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): Yes, Sir; such is the case. From the 1st of next month, the commencement of the next financial year, my hon. Friend the Member for Leeds will be in receipt of the salary which is usually paid to each of the Junior Lords of the Treasury.

Mr. MACARTNEY: In consequence of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether you have received the usual notice by a paper signed by two other Members of the fact stated by the right hon. Gentleman?

Mr. SPEAKER: I am not in receipt of any such notice.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: If the hon. Member puts any further Question on this subject, I shall follow it by a Question to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to ask, whether the hon. Member for Leeds has ever been brought before the Land Commission and had his rent reduced?

Mr. SEXTON asked, whether the hon. Member for Leeds would have to resign his seat in consequence of taking Office?

Lord RICHARD GROSVENOR: I beg to say that my hon. Friend did resign his seat when he took Office, and was duly re-elected

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—REPORTED FALL OF KASSALA.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask, Whether the Government have any information with regard to a matter mentioned yesterday in some newspapers as to the reported fall of Kassala?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: No information has been received of the fall of Kassala, but only a telegram received from Sir Evelyn Baring, forwarding a telegram received by him from Consul Baker at Suakin, in which it was stated that it was rumoured at Suakin that Kassala had fallen, but there was no reliable news either at Suakin or Cairo.

Sir FREDERICK MILNER asked, Whether it was not the case that the Governor of Suakin had received intelligence from Kassala, that the garrison was still holding out, and that two more attempts upon the town had been repulsed, but that as famine was present in the garrison, and that the ammunition was failing fast, it was impossible to hold out beyond the end of March; and, whether, under those deplorable circumstances, in the interests of humanity and for the honour of England, Her Majesty's Government would not make some effort even now to relieve these heroic men, and thus to save the country from the indelible disgrace which the massacre of the garrison must entail upon us?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE, in reply, said, that with regard to the statement of fact contained in the Question, his reply was in the affirmative, that such information had been received.

THE BUDGET—REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE—PROBATE DUTY ON FREEHOLD PROPERTY.

MR. ALDERMAN LAWRENCE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of increased taxation being necessary for the financial year 1885-6, he will consider the advisability of charging probate duty on freehold property in the same manner as it is now charged on leasehold property?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS), in reply, said, he would take into consideration any suggestion made to him by his hon. Friend; but he could give the House no information as to the Budget until he introduced it.

EGYPT—ZEBEHR PASHA.

MR. MONK asked, Whether the Government could confirm the report of the deportation of Zebehr Pasha?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: Yes, Sir; I have information confirming the reported arrest of Zebehr Pasha.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

NAVY—HIRED TRANSPORTS.

RESOLUTION.

DR. CAMERON, in rising to call attention to the system of chartering hired transports pursued by the Admiralty; and to move—

"That the system of chartering and managing hired transports pursued by the Admiralty officials is unbusinesslike, extravagant, and detrimental to the satisfactory working of home preparations for foreign wars,"

said, that two Committees had been appointed to investigate into the conduct of the Egyptian Campaign, one being that presided over by Lord Morley, and the other the Select Committee of the House of Commons to inquire into the working of the Commissariat and Transport Services. He had read the Reports, and anyone that chose to look into them would, he thought, be struck at the extraordinary number of instances in which elaborate and costly preparations at home were neutralized owing to late arrival in Egypt. The *Carthage*, for instance, was chartered at £7,500 per month, or £250 per day, for use as a base hospital and transport for the sick. She went out to Ismailia, and arrived late The landing arrangements at Ismailia were extremely defective. In order to facilitate landing, a portable pier was constructed at Woolwich, but it did not arrive at Ismailia until a very short time before the conclusion of the campaign—too late to be of any use. There was a line of railway in existence, and in order to utilize it, locomotives were purchased in England and sent out to Ismailia. These engines arrived several days late. Others were purchased at Alexandria, and went round with the Expedition. It was intended to land them at Ismailia by the aid of a vessel named the *Recovery*, which was fitted for the purpose; but, on their arrival, the *Recovery* was not to be found, and when she arrived, it was too late to be of use. A telegraph corps of the Royal Engineers was maintained in this country, so as to be ready in time of war. That corps was sent out to Egypt, but arrived a week late. There was, again, the iron ration—a ration which the men were expected to carry about with them constantly, so that they should not be in want of a meal if cut off from the Commissariat Department. That ration was sent out, but it was not available until Cairo had been seized. Huts were sent out; they arrived late. A siege train was sent out, but was landed only on the day of the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. The transport animals all arrived late; and this was especially the case with 800 mules, which had been in the hands of the Government months before. This delay, some of his friends said, was owing to the Admiralty's penchant for hiring slow-going steamers. A most respectable shipowner wrote him that, in consequence of the manner in which he had been treated at the Admiralty, he had given up all attempts to treat with the Government. Commission and brokerage, another gentleman told him, was at the bottom of the whole business. A Mr. Baughan, who had the charge of giving out the charters, had a brother-in-law in the office of a firm of ship-brokers, and that firm obtained for their clients an enormous percentage of the charters given out, and so difficult was it to get a charter through

any other channel that one company of shipowners, itself managed by a very old-established shipbroker, had, his correspondent informed him, thought it proper to charter their vessels through that firm. Another correspondent called his attention to evidence given by the Chief Constructor at the Admiralty (Mr. Dunn) before the Royal Commission on Merchant Shipping. From that it appeared that there was a rule in the Admiralty not to accept vessels which did not comply with certain requirements, and which were technically known as being on the Admiralty list. The Chairman of the Commission, in reply, remarked that, for some branches of the Government service, they took ships which did not comply with the requirements of the Admiralty. Under those circumstances, he (Dr. Cameron) asked for a Return, which he thought might give some light on the subject. He explained to the then Secretary of the Admiralty (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) why he wanted the Return. He told him (Dr. Cameron) that it was unusual to give such a Return; but he did not wish to conceal anything, and he gave the Return. That Return was ordered to be printed on 27th July last. It purported to be a Return of all the chartered vessels for Egypt, and to state whether they were chartered direct from the owners or through brokers. The first thing that struck one about the Return was that it omitted the names of a large number of transports. The names of the following were not contained in it:—namely, *Euphrates*, *Etna*, *Neptune*, *Theres*, *Peshawur*, *Thames*, *Osmanli*, *Sesostris*, *Adowa*, and *Belgravia*. He should like the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Caine), whom he understood was to reply, to explain why these vessels were not in the Return. Turning to the Return itself, what struck one was this—that out of the 72 vessels chartered, no less than 15 were chartered from one firm of brokers—Messrs. Ellis and Son—and out of £860,000 paid for these vessels, no less than £175,000, or a little over a fifth, was paid for vessels chartered through Messrs. Ellis and Son. Other charters were obtained through other brokers, but the amount paid for these was comparatively small, and there was nothing to compare with the transactions of the Messrs. Ellis. His object in bringing forward the Motion was, if possible, to obtain a reform of a state of things which appeared to be most detrimental to the public interest. The hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty had not long been in Office, and, when on the Radical Benches, used to joke at the red tapeism that prevailed in the Government Departments; and he (Dr. Cameron) could hardly fancy that he had already been so long at the Admiralty as to have become so permeated with red tape and officialism that he would do anything rather than return a straightforward and business-like answer. He had explained to the hon. Gentleman his points, and had given him time to inquire into them; and he hoped he would reply in the frank, open manner that was characteristic of him a few months ago. He (Dr. Cameron) told him of the alleged brother-in-law arrangement. He understood he had looked into the matter, and it was true that Mr. Baughan, who had the giving out of the charters, was connected with the firm of Messrs. Ellis, or had some connection or relative in the office. That was a matter of fact. He knew that blood was thicker than water, and he should not find fault with a man who did a good turn to his brother-in-law. If, at the same time, he could do a service to a relative and the State, it might be argued that he was all the more valuable a servant of the State on that account. But in this case it was hardly so; and he (Dr. Cameron) objected altogether to the system of brokerage and commissions in this matter. There were very grave objections to the system which divided the responsibility of land and water transport between two Departments. In the first place, if they intrusted one Department with the duty of providing the money and another with spending it, they would certainly have extravagance; while, with two Establishments, they multiplied the chances of breakdowns. The only justification of which the present system was capable was this—that the Admiralty knew all about ships, their management, and chartering, and the War Office knew nothing about them. If all the inconveniences of the present system were to be encountered simply in order that an official at the Admiralty should hand over to a broker his responsibili-

ties in the matter of hiring ships, it seemed to him that an official at the War Office might as well be intrusted with the business. He need not delay in talking to any man who had a knowledge of commercial matters of the importance of dealing with principals; when others were dealt with, the purchaser—in this case the nation—must indirectly pay the commission. But that was not the extravagance he denounced. The extravagance he denounced lay in the mismanagement of the system of transport in such a way as to render nugatory the most costly and elaborate preparations at home—mismanagement which, if we had to meet a warlike foe, might be fraught with very disastrous consequences to the nation. He had already made a reference to the very defective landing arrangements at Ismailia. It must be borne in mind that it was intended from the first to make Ismailia the base of our operations, and the Engineer officers, taking time by the forelock, fitted up at Woolwich a portable pier. This pier carried a railway and cranes, and a shears or derrick for lifting heavy weights. At this point, it was proper to remark that there could be no doubt as to the meaning of the word "late" in connection with the Expedition. The date of its commencement and completion were planned from the first. As to the end of the campaign, Sir Garnet Wolseley had stated his intention of occupying Cairo on the 15th of September; and, as a matter of fact, he entered the city on the 14th, so that the end of the war was anticipated by only one day. As to the commencement, the simultaneous massing of the English Military and Naval and the Indian Forces showed that the date of the seizure of Ismailia must have been determined on long in advance. The Engineer officer who was to put up the pier went to Woolwich and inspected it, and he arrived at the Suez Canal before the Expedition. Ismailia was occupied on August 20. The pier was not sent out in his vessel, but in three others. The first of these vessels, the *Canadian*, arrived on August 23; the second, the *Stelling*, after a 19 days' voyage, on September 5; and the third, the *Lechmere*, on September 8; these two last arriving 16 and 19 days respectively after landing of first troops, and eight and five days respectively before the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. The pier, which would have been invaluable had it been received in time, was thus rendered utterly useless; the cranes were never taken out of the ship; and as to the shears, one of its legs was left behind, so that it would have been useless if it had arrived. These preparations for the initial stages of the campaign were sent out in slow vessels of 9 to 9½ knots an hour. Both the *Stelling* and the *Lechmere* were chartered through brokers, one of them through Messrs. Ellis and Son. He had mentioned the locomotives sent out for the purpose of working the railway on which it was intended to rely for transport. These were sent in the *Lechmere*, a 9½-knot vessel, chartered through Messrs. Ellis and Son, and arrived only a week before the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. Happily, other engines had been procured at Alexandria, and brought round with the Expedition. These were to be landed at Ismailia by the *Recovery*, which was specially fitted with apparatus to lift heavy weights; but when they arrived the *Recovery* could not be found, and they were sent on to Suez, where there was an antiquated machine, described by Colonel Wallace as—

"A crane, with a curious sort of engine with belting, not gearing, which gave way with the second heaviest engine lifted."

The heaviest lift was 20 tons, and Captain Hext, R.N., who had the charge of the crane, thus described the operation—

"The two last engines were a heavy lift, and we had to screw the safety valve of the crane's boiler before we could stir them. The Arab stoker bolted when he saw the steam pressure go above 40 lbs.; but we got it up to 52 with a trusty English stoker. I should not care to have a heavier lift; but, if you send them, they are bound to come out. I think the man who sits on a safety-valve and knows his own danger deserves the Victoria Cross."

As to the *Recovery*, Colonel Wallace said he never heard of her arrival. He said—"She may have come, but she was not in time to be of any use to us." It appeared, however, from a question put to Colonel Wallace by the Surveyor General of the Ordnance (Mr. Brand), that the *Recovery* did arrive, but she was 10 days late, arriving at Ismailia on September 1. She was also chartered through Messrs. Ellis. Being of no use for the purpose intended, she was used as a tug. There was another tug—namely, the *Storm Cock*, a vessel of 328 tons, which was charged at the rate of

£750 per month, or about £2 5s. 8d. per ton per month. The most expensive vessel chartered was the *Catalonia*, at the rate of 35s. per ton per month. The next highest was the *Carthage*, which was chartered at 30s., and only four other vessels were chartered at rates above 25s. Every other vessel, including the tug *Recovery*, was charged more than £1 per month less than the *Storm Cock*. She was chartered through Ellis and Son, and belonged to Mr. W. Beckett Hill. Several of Mr. Hill's vessels had been chartered by Messrs. Ellis and Son—the *Tower Hill*, the *Ludgate Hill*, for example. The *Notting Hill* was amongst the vessels belonging to the same owner, but she was stated in the Return to have been chartered direct from Mr. Hill. Of all the cases of mismanagement connected with this Expedition the case of the *Notting Hill* was, perhaps, the most gross. After the Transvaal War the Government had a quantity of mules left on their hands as surplus at Natal; and, in anticipation of their being required for the war in Egypt, a telegram was sent to Natal asking how many spare mules they could supply. The Commissary in charge of the station was also Admiralty Agent at Durban, and he had told the Committee that there was not the smallest difficulty in obtaining transport on the spot or fitting out, and that it was customary to use small vessels suited to the transport of from 200 to 250 animals each for the purpose, as being more convenient to deal with than larger vessels. He further gave evidence that, had he been intrusted with the business, he could have got the mules to Egypt in good time. On the 24th of July, when the order was given to take up the transport, the *Notting Hill* was at Algoa Bay, 500 miles from Natal, and laden with wool. On that day Mr. Ellis, of Messrs. Ellis and Son, called at the office of one of the great Cape Companies and asked them if they could not engage to take home the load of wool, in order to leave the *Notting Hill* at liberty to undertake the transport of mules. Now, in the Return, the Messrs. Ellis and Son were not given as the brokers through whom the *Notting Hill* was chartered. The order to procure the transport had only been given on the 24th of July, and the bargain was completed on July the 27th. Meanwhile, Messrs. Ellis and Son had been endeavouring to arrange for the transport of the cargo of wool, and all he could say was that if the Messrs. Ellis and Son had not got their commission, it was hard lines on them, and they deserved to get it. Evidently, the Cape Liner people had their suspicions aroused in connection with the business, and on the following day, the 25th, the representative of one of the leading lines applied at the Admiralty and stated that they had an empty vessel on the spot ready to take the mules to Egypt. Their offer was refused; they were told their vessel was too small. About the same date, a telegram was addressed by the Admiralty to the "Transport Officer, Algoa Bay." Such an address was as vague as would be an address to an officer at the Bay of Biscay. Port Elizabeth was the port of Algoa Bay, but there had not been a Transport Officer there for many years. Such was the evidence given before the Committee. Accordingly, the telegram asking the Transport Officer at Algoa Bay to detain the *Notting Hill* went kicking about South Africa, there being no Transport Officer at Algoa Bay. Ultimately it found its way to the Adjutant General, who forwarded it to the Admiral at St. Simon's Bay. Thus, a great deal of valuable time had been lost. Now, that telegram had been burked in the Correspondence on the subject ordered by the Select Committee. Several telegrams which had been ordered by the Committee had been suppressed, and that was one of them. On July 29th, however, the Admiral at St. Simon's Bay sent home a telegram stating that the *Notting Hill* was not available, but that empty steamers could be had at the Cape for the transport. On the 27th of July, the regular Cape traders had apparently heard enough to convince them that they were not in the race for the transport of the mules, and they determined to take the wool cargo from the *Notting Hill*. It was arranged that they were to receive the entire freight for the wool, and a premium of £2,000; and on the very day on which that arrangement was concluded with those trading Companies, the bargain with the Admiralty was concluded for the charter of the *Notting Hill* for the conveyance of the mules, pay to commence on July 28th. The owners of the *Notting Hill* had agreed to give £2,000 premium on

the freight for bringing home the wool, and they got £3,000 from the Admiralty for expenses of transfer of cargo, and £1,000 for the number of days allowed them to get rid of the cargo. Their charter was for £4,000 a-month. As a matter of fact, however, instead of the prescribed number of days for getting rid of the cargo, they had taken 10 or 11 days, and they did not arrive at St. Simon's Bay until August 7. Now, he wanted to know whether they had been paid for the 11 days, or for the number at first fixed? Three weeks more —for which the country paid another £3,000—were wasted at St. Simon's Bay in refitting. Upon arriving at Durban, it was found that the *Notting Hill* did not contain accommodation for the whole of the mules. She started on September the 5th, and did not arrive at Aden—five days from Suez—until a week after the fall of Cairo. The mules were afterwards disposed of to the Indian Government at a very high figure; but notwithstanding the good bargain with the Indian Authorities, the cost for the chartering of the *Notting Hill*, the forage for the mules, the equipment for drivers, and the coal expense of the transport which we were put to, more than swallowed up the total price received from the Indian Authorities. From a commercial point of view, the nation would have been a gainer had the mules been slaughtered at Natal for the sake of their hides and hoofs. Everyone must remember the bargain of Moses Primrose, which was regarded as a type of everything foolish in trading; but it was a model of wisdom as compared with this fiasco, which had cost the country from £20,000 to £25,000, without having even a gross of shagreen spectacles, like Moses Primrose, to show for it. All those preparations might have been efficiently carried out, if the transport had been ordered through either the Admiralty Agent at Durban, or through the Admiral at St. Simon's Bay. He thought he had said enough about the 15 vessels besides the *Notting Hill* chartered through Messrs. Ellis and Son, to show that however well their brokerage arrangements might act in practice, they did not turn out for the public interest. It appeared to him, however, that even in other cases the work of the Admiralty in hiring steamers had not been conducted in a business-like manner. The Royal Engineers Telegraph Corps, for instance, was a corps that was maintained in efficiency in time of peace to be in readiness for time of war. In the Egyptian War their services were of the first importance, and yet the Telegraphist Corps had been sent out in the *Oxenholme*, the champion sluggard of the Fleet, described in the Return as an 8½-knot vessel. The consequence was that they did not arrive until August 28, after the engagement at El Magfar, the capture of Tel-el-Mahuta, the occupation of Mashama and Kassassin, and on the date of the first attack on Kassassin. Meanwhile the communications had been conducted somehow. Colonel Salmond, the officer sent out to erect the pier, which arrived too late, had turned his attention to the effort of getting together a scratch band of telegraphists. Luckily, Arabi's men, in cutting the telegraph wires along the railway, did not remove them, and Colonel Salmond looked about for someone who could solder them together. He found a man there who, he thought, knew how to solder the wires and "make earth." By means of pantomime he assured himself that the man understood what he wanted, and it was upon that Arab tinker that our Army had been dependent for telegraphic communication during the first week of the war. He (Dr. Cameron) did not know whether the Government had offered him any remuneration or recognition of his services. The chief Army medical officer complained bitterly of the suffering to the wounded, because, as he had said, owing to the defective telegraphic arrangements, the wounded were arriving before the telegrams announcing their approach, and in the absence of the necessary preparations they were frequently left uncared for for some time. Take another instance. The siege train was rather an important item in a campaign, and Captain Rawson, of the Navy, the principal naval transport officer, in his evidence, had said that the Chief of the Staff wanted the siege train so badly that, directly the vessel had arrived with it, he sent a written requisition that they should land it at once, but they succeeded in landing it only on the day of the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. This siege train had been sent out in a vessel of only nine knots an hour. Then, as to the *Carthage*, he was

not going to argue the question, as to which authorities were divided, whether she was the best sort of vessel to employ as a base hospital and transport for the sick and wounded. But she was hired for that purpose, the pay commenced on the 25th of July, and it was at the rate of £7,500 a-month, or £250 per day. He did not dispute that she was quite worth that figure; but it was a large one, and if the nation was content to pay it, it had at least the right to expect that the vessel would be available for the purpose for which she was hired. As a matter of fact, instead of hastening on to Alexandria, and starting thence with the Expedition, she left England on August 9th, wasted 26 hours coaling at Malta, although she could carry coal for three weeks' steaming, and might perfectly well have coaled at home while fitting out—arrived at Alexandria after the Expedition had started, wasted some 40 precious hours there, and did not arrive at Ismailia until after the first engagement had been fought. As a consequence, the wounded and sick were put to great suffering and inconvenience, and all the medical arrangements were upset. It might be said that all these things occurred in the Expedition of 1882, and that there was nothing of the kind in connection with the present Expedition. He was not quite so certain of that. The Authorities were just as complaisant about the management of the Expedition of 1882 before these inquiries had been held. On referring to the Appropriation Accounts for last year, he found some correspondence between the Accountant General and the Secretary of the Admiralty, in which an increase in the pension of Admiral Mends—against whom personally he had not a word to say—was recommended on the ground that the Transport Department had been on several occasions—

"Successfully tested by the severe strain of war, and this was notably the case in the last Egyptian Expedition, the success of which depended to a great extent upon the celerity of the movement of the component parts of the Force employed."

Moreover, in connection with the present Nile Expedition, he might mention one instance which showed that the want of distinct differentiation of responsibility for given duties still existed. Mr. Roper had invented a kind of raft, which he was anxious to have tested on the Nile, and he wrote to Lord Wolseley and to the Admiralty on the subject. From Lord Wolseley he received a letter, stating that he had handed his communication to the Director of Ordnance and Stores for transmission to the Admiralty. From the Admiralty he receivd a letter stating that the matter was one which concerned the War Office, and that accordingly his application had been forwarded to that Department. Again, a want of business management was demonstrated by the manner in which, if he was correctly informed, the Canadian boatmen were brought over to this country. As everyone was aware, there were first-class lines of steamers running between this country and Canada, and the obvious course would have been to bring over these men by the regular line of steamers. However, if he was correctly informed, the *Ocean King* was chartered, and went out to Canada empty for the purpose of carrying the men here. One improvement, however, had taken place in connection with the present operations. Since the publication of his Return, the shipowners had ceased to complain of undue favouritism to the Messrs. Ellis and Co. But complaints were as rife as ever of the want of anything like open competition, and that, consequently, the best, cheapest, and most expeditious means of transport were not obtained. He begged to move the Motion that stood in his name.

MR. PULESTON rose to second the Amendment. In his opinion, enough had already been stated to justify the House in accepting it. He was told that the Committee of last year was not going to be re-appointed. If that was so, the time of the House would be occupied in going into details which would otherwise come before the Committee. The refusal to re-appoint the Committee would be a public scandal, in view of the facts which had already been brought out. It might be said that officials and Members of the Government were busily occupied; but the Committee would not require their attendance at any time when their services were required elsewhere. He did not entirely concur with all that had been said by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron); but he had no hesitation in supporting the Motion. It had repeatedly been stated in the House

that the Commissariat and the Transport Departments should be specially and separately organized if we were to avoid in future a repetition of the scandals which appeared to be always occurring whenever arrangements had to be made in connection with war or rumours of war. He hoped the Government would say that they were prepared to agree to the adoption of some different system. He did not see why the system of brokerage should be maintained with such unerring regularity instead of going into the open market. It was not necessary to approach his hon. Friend the Member for Greenock (Mr. Sutherland), who was at the head of one of the largest Steamship Companies in the country, through half-a-dozen brokers. Indeed, business could often times be transacted in a much more satisfactory manner when there was no third party to intervene. This question had been so often discussed that he should have thought some satisfactory system would by this time have been adopted, especially seeing that Members on the Treasury Bench had expressed the opinion that it would be better if Transport and Commissariat arrangements were placed in the hands of one Chief with a separate Department. He considered that open competition, open tenders, and an open market would bring the Government much better arrangements than they had hitherto been able to make. The time must soon come for the abolition of the present system, which not only retarded the progress of our soldiers and sailors when fighting our battles in foreign lands, but which also resulted in a needless expenditure of money. He should like to hear whether the Admiralty had really discussed this matter at all, and he hoped that the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, when he came to reply, would be able to state what course the Admiralty proposed to adopt. He seconded the Resolution with great satisfaction, and trusted that this would be the last time that the House would hear anything of the subject.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "the system of chartering and managing hired transports pursued by the Admiralty officials is unbusinesslike, extravagant, and detrimental to the satisfactory working of home preparations for foreign wars,"—(*Dr. Cameron.*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. SUTHERLAND said, that, as one who had had something to do with shipping affairs and with the arrangement of vessels and transports for the Admiralty, he listened to the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow with very great interest and curiosity. He certainly thought that his hon. Friend, seeing the notion he entertained on this subject, was perfectly right in bringing the matter before the House, and his hon. Friend was to be credited with having discharged, in a manner that few persons could have done, a duty which could not have been agreeable to him. It was no part of his (Mr. Sutherland's) business to defend the action of the Admiralty in this matter; he left that to the able and more responsible hands of his hon. Friend on the Government Bench. But having had at various times a good deal to do with transport arrangements, he should like to place before the House the result of his own experience. Before doing so he would allude to one or two points mentioned by his hon. Friend in the course of his speech. In the first place, the words of the Motion appeared to be somewhat vague in their character. His hon. Friend, in his Motion, said that—

"The system of chartering and managing hired transports pursued by the Admiralty officials was unbusinesslike, extravagant, and detrimental to the satisfactory working of home preparations for foreign wars,"

which meant that the transport work of the Admiralty was transacted in an unbusiness-like manner. That was a very easy way of bringing forward an accusation, because it was quite certain that there was a very great difference among people as to what was and what was not a business-like manner of transacting such affairs. He believed that the Admiralty could only do their work in a business-like manner when they acted as an individual would act in any business transaction for his own interest and profit. If the Admiralty had fulfilled that condition, they would have conducted their business to the advantage of the country and with as great an economy as possible. There were two or three ways in which freight on a large scale might be hired. The first method was to advertise for public fai-

lities. Another was to employ a broker to hire ships. Or, thirdly, a merchant might himself have a chartering department in his own office and transact the business himself. As to the first, no merchant or shipowner who understood his business would ever put up at public tender the large amount of tonnage required for transport. In the business with which he was connected he had to find tonnage in the course of the year for between 300,000 and 400,000 tons, and his Company never invited tenders for it, but chartered it themselves. There was a time when they did invite tenders, and they found that when the market was favourable the contractor carried out the operation, and that when it was unfavourable he frequently failed. Other reasons could be adduced why, in the case of the Admiralty, this system should not be adopted. There was such a reason in regard to secrecy. It might be of the greatest possible importance that they should hire transport without the public knowing anything of it; and another reason was that transports were sometimes wanted in the greatest possible haste, and to endeavour to secure them by public competition would inevitably cause delay. Then the Admiralty might engage a broker and place the whole of their business in his hands; and he believed they could easily find a firm of sufficient credit and integrity to undertake the work. But he thought they had adopted a still better plan in conducting the business in their own Office, for he believed that they possessed in their Department all the knowledge that was required for the work. Such knowledge was not to be picked up in a single day; and if the suggestions of his hon. Friend were carried out, and the work transferred to a new Department, it could only be properly performed if the machinery which had the necessary experience were transferred with it. He had reason to complain of the Admiralty in some respects, because he thought they would do much better for the public if they confined themselves to faster vessels. But, on the whole, he thought that public opinion in all parts of the City of London was to the effect that the business of the Admiralty had been done with the greatest possible efficiency. Mistakes might have been made here and there; but it was easy to be wise after the event. The Expedition to which the speech of his hon. Friend referred was most speedily and efficiently carried out. Nor did he find in his hon. Friend's speech any suggestions as to how the work could have been better done. His hon. Friend thought that the Admiralty paid more than the market price. If his hon. Friend were able to prove that that had been done on a considerable scale, he would have made out a case which a Committee would be bound to inquire into. It might happen, without any fault of theirs, that the Admiralty would be obliged to pay 15 or 20 per cent more than they would have had to do 24 hours before. Various inconsistencies and incongruities might perhaps be pointed out in the hiring of certain ships; but the explanation did not lie altogether on the surface. It might happen, for instance, that a ship of 3,000 tons was taken up at a higher figure than a ship of 4,500 or 5,000 tons. But it might also be the case that the smaller vessel would carry out a battalion much more conveniently and at a less cost for coals and other matters. His hon. Friend had stated that a large sum had been paid for the hospital ship *Carthage*—some £58,000 or £59,000—which would have covered her cost.

DR. CAMERON: I said nothing of the cost. I merely stated that £7,500 a-month had been paid for the vessel.

MR. SUTHERLAND: The original cost of the ship was something like £150,000, and the Admiralty paid a large sum for the *Carthage* simply because they could not get her for less. The most expensive ship they hired was the *Catalonia*, for which they paid £1 15*s.* a-ton per day. But the Cunard Company had that ship in regular and most valuable employment; and they could not be expected to remove her from that employment for a two months' charter for the comparatively paltry pittance of 15*s.* or 20*s.* per ton a-day. Ships now could be chartered at a very much smaller cost than they could be three years ago, because shipping had received an addition of 1,500,000 tons, and shipowners were glad to accept very low rates. His hon. Friend stated that vessels had been chartered which were not on a certain Admiralty list. To what list did his hon. Friend refer? If he mistook not, his hon. Friend alluded to something

which had happened during the tenure of power of the late Government, when they were building a large number of ships and Mr. Ward Hunt was First Lord of the Admiralty. The basis of that list was a very simple one—that every ship should be divided into compartments, that in the event of one compartment being filled the ship might still keep afloat. This implied a good deal of courtesy on the part of the enemy, because it implied that he would keep firing into that compartment. There was no doubt that the compartment idea was a good one in itself; but shipowners were not led to believe, as his hon. Friend supposed, that only vessels on the list would be chartered——

DR. CAMERON: I quoted a statement made by Mr. Dunn, and the remark of the Chairman of the Commission upon it.

MR. SUTHERLAND understood that his hon. Friend had a grievance upon this point; and if not, he did not see the relevancy of his observations. No shipowner thought that the Admiralty would confine themselves to this list. In his view, his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow had not succeeded in establishing that the service of 1882—the period to which his accusations referred—was not, taken all in all, thoroughly well done. What were the facts of the case? In the middle of July the first vessel was taken up for the transport service, and within three weeks of that date 200,000 tons of shipping were engaged for the transport of troops to Egypt. Within some six or seven weeks of that date these 200,000 tons of shipping had conveyed the Army a distance of 3,000 miles, Tel-el-Kebir had been fought, and the object of the campaign had been accomplished. That was a result which was highly creditable to the Mercantile Marine of this country, and none of the statements of his hon. Friend had detracted in the smallest degree from the broad general efficiency displayed by the Government Department in carrying out the work.

MR. MAC IVER said, he very much regretted the speech of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), for he had made serious personal charges against Gentlemen who were not present to defend themselves, and who could not have an opportunity of defending themselves from charges which were, he believed, without foundation. He knew many of the vessels which had been named by the hon. Member, and in almost every case he had been wrong in his facts. There was a certain amount of partial truth in what the hon. Member said; but if he had told the whole truth it would have altogether changed the views which he had endeavoured to get the House to accept. He did not personally know either Mr. Baughan or the Messrs. Ellis; but he indirectly knew a great deal about them, and certainly shipowners generally had very different views about them to those adverse views expressed by the hon. Member for Glasgow. The hon. Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston) used the word "job." There was no shipowner who believed that there had been the least jobbery.

MR. PULESTON said, he did not charge anyone with jobbery; but only said that a system like this, if pursued in another country, would have been called by that name.

MR. MAC IVER said, it appeared to him that both that charge and those brought against the Admiralty by the hon. Member for Glasgow had been made on entirely insufficient grounds. The Admiralty Transport Department had, undoubtedly, sometimes made mistakes. We all made mistakes; but he believed, and it was the belief of the vast majority of shipowners, that the Transport Department of the Admiralty did its work with perfect honesty, and, upon the whole, cheaply. If there was a fault to be found, it hardly lay at the doors of the Transport Department; but it did at the doors of those who were instructing them. If the Department hired slow ship sometimes when they ought to have chartered faster ones, the reason was that the prices which were at this moment paid for ships were so low, that no owners of valuable and fast vessels could afford to give them at the prices. With regard to the *Belgravia*, which was a Glasgow ship, the hon. Member omitted to tell the House the price at which the owners would give her services; but he was sure they could not give her to the Government at 11*s.* or 12*s.* 6*d.* per ton, which was about the rate for cargo ships, or even 17*s.* 6*d.* per ton, which was given for other vessels well adapted for troop-carrying, but not so fast or so valuable as the *Bel-*

gravis. He did blame the officers of the Admiralty for not taking such vessels as the *Belgravia* and those of the Peninsular and Oriental Company; but it would be utter folly for the owners of those valuable vessels to take such prices as the Admiralty, under the pressure of undue economy, were at present giving. The hon. Member for Glasgow referred to a variety of things connected with the transport business—mules, ships' pumps, railway engines, telegraph wire, and Canadian boatmen. The hon. Member might have finished each story with the words "too late," and he did so by implication. But who was responsible for this constant system of "too late?" The earlier Egyptian Expedition terminated much earlier than was anticipated; but if it had not terminated as early, every one of the things mentioned by the hon. Member would have been required. The hon. Member also suggested that the Admiralty should deal direct with the shipowners when they wanted to charter vessels; but did he know that the Admiralty had quite recently as many as 1,100 steamers offered them? It would have been impossible for the owners of all these to have treated directly with the Admiralty, and such a system would be quite absurd and unreasonable. The proper way for doing it was, as the hon. Member for Greenock (Mr. Sutherland) had suggested, to employ agents to find the Government the vessels they wanted. The hon. Member for Glasgow referred to the price paid for the *Storm Cock*. This vessel belonged to a class of which there were not more than two or three in the country, being a very powerful twin screw-tug It was therefore absurd to compare this vessel with trading vessels of any ordinary kind, or to expect that it could be had at the same rate. The *Recovery*, which belonged to the Liverpool Underwriters' Association, was a vessel with exceptional appliances for lifting heavy weights, and, had the war continued, would have been extremely useful. He doubted if there was another steamer like her in this country, and therefore it was unreasonable to expect that she could be had at as cheap a rate as vessels of an ordinary description. He thanked the House for having permitted him to reply to the very unfair and inaccurate statements made by the hon. Member for Glasgow.

MR. A. H. BROWN said, he thought the Transport Department of the Admiralty could not be charged with want of energy. In his opinion, the case of the hon. Member for Glasgow that the stores were always too late, broke down on examination. The late campaign in Egypt was fought out before a base had fairly been formed. Sufficient military reasons could be adduced for this course, and therefore the charge that the Admiralty were too late could not be sustained. Looking to the tonnage employed, the result of the Expedition was one of which they ought to be proud. In all wars it always would be found that military exigencies arose against which it would be impossible to provide in a moment. In his opinion, the stopping of the transports and the preventing them entering the Suez Canal, were due to such military exigencies, and not due to mismanagement by the Transport Department of the Admiralty.

MR. GILES thought that the discursive onslaught made by the hon. Member for Glasgow on the Transport Department of the Admiralty was a little exaggerated, and somewhat undeserved. The hon. Member had said the operations of the Transport Department were unbusiness-like and extravagant, and suggested that it would have been well if the Government had issued tenders to the shipowners; but after it had been stated that 1,100 vessels were offered to the Admiralty without tenders, he left it to the House to imagine how many would have been offered if advertisements for tenders had been sent out. It was not too much to say that, had they advertised, every old tub in the Kingdom would have been offered to them. As to the charge of extravagance against the Department, he could only say from his own experience that the shipowners were by no means satisfied with the prices they got, and did not think them at all extravagant. The hon. Member complained that some owners employed brokers; but just as a landowner employed agents, so also many shipowners had their business managed by brokers, and he thought the Government acted wisely in selecting in this way the vessels they considered would answer their purpose He was bound to say, when he heard the reflections that had been made upon the Head of the Transport Department, that in his opinion they were entirely undeserved.

not be passed by, against a well-known firm of shipbrokers—Messrs. Ellis and Son—and against a gentleman—Mr. Baughan—whose business it was in the Admiralty to charter ships. Messrs. Ellis and Son had been chartering ships for the Admiralty since the Crimean War. They were one of the oldest firms in the business, and they had obtained a special knowledge of the requirements of the Admiralty, and it was not, therefore, to be wondered at that owners of ships placed their vessels in the hands of Messrs. Ellis and Son for tender to the Admiralty. The hon. Member suggested, as he (Mr. Caine) understood, that they got an extra number of ships engaged in consequence of some favouritism, owing to there being a relative of Mr. Baughan in their office. Those who heard his hon. Friend's speech would be inclined to suppose that this relation of Mr. Baughan's was really a partner interested in the pecuniary results of these transactions. As a matter of fact, however, the person referred to was in the office of Messrs. Ellis and Son, and enjoyed the munificent and remunerative salary of £70 a-year. That would give the House an idea of the influence this gentleman possessed in Messrs. Ellis and Son's office. He was glad that the shipowners in the House had spoken up for Mr. Baughan, and had not left the defence of that gentleman to him. They had, in fact, borne so striking testimony to his integrity and ability as to leave him (Mr. Caine) little to say on that subject. But with respect to the Messrs. Ellis and Son, he must say that they were a well-known firm, having business relations with the largest firms in the Port of Liverpool and other ports. A number of ships were always placed in their hands by shipowners throughout the country, and they were able to submit by far the largest number of ships that came under the notice of the Transport Department of the Admiralty. In the present operations, Messrs. Ellis and Son had furnished, only a week or two ago, to the Admiralty a single list of 75 ships, of which, as yet, only four had been chartered, simply because now, in the unfortunately depressed condition of shipping, the ships offered were greatly in excess of those available during the previous Expedition. He noticed that his hon. Friend, in his speech, paid an unconscious compliment to Messrs. Ellis and Son, in saying that they outwitted a leading firm engaged in the Cape trade. Any broker or any firm that could outwit his hon. Friend the Member for Perthshire (Sir Donald Currie)—who was at the head of the "Castle" line of Cape steamers—must be very sharp-witted indeed. Now, as to the question of brokerage, the hon. Member seemed to be under the impression that the brokerage was paid by the Government. This was not the case; the brokerage was paid by the owners of the ships. Out of the 72 vessels on the list which his hon. Friend (Dr. Cameron) moved for, 34 were chartered from brokers and 38 from owners; and if his hon. Friend examined the list, he would find that the ships chartered by the shipbrokers were not, on the whole, dearer than those chartered direct from the shipowners. The hon. Member had very severely referred to the delay in the arrival of the *Carthage*, which was chartered at £750 a-month for a medical transport and hospital ship, and which, he said, did not arrive at Alexandria until three days after the departure of the Expedition to Ismailia, and that it was not available until after two engagements had been fought, thus throwing the medical arrangements out of gear. But he (Mr. Caine) had already explained that this ship was one which was stopped by Lord Wolseley; and, indeed, instead of applying the phrase "too late" to this and to other cases, it might be said that they arose from Lord Wolseley being "too soon." It was the marvellous rapidity with which Lord Wolseley carried out the campaign, not that these vessels were "too late." With regard to the *Notting Hill*, no doubt it had taken longer on its journey than had been expected; but it was by no means a costly ship for what it was required to do, and if its work had to be done over again, it would probably be done in exactly the same way. As to the pier of which the hon. Member complained, because it was sent in three ships, that was because it could not be got into one. The hon. Gentleman had referred to the *Recovery* and to the lifting of locomotive engines. It must be borne in mind, however, that the *Recovery* was half a tug and half a salvage vessel, and that the cost of building such a vessel would have been very great.

In these circumstances, therefore, £600 per month was a reasonable rate for such a ship. The vessel was not intended to lift locomotives, but to lift sunken ships and lighters in the Canal. The hon. Gentleman had wrongly described the *Oxenholme* as an eight-and-a-half-knot ship. As a matter of fact, however, in the course of this Expedition, the vessel steamed 10 knots one day and 11 knots on another. The figure quoted by the hon. Member from the Return was a wrong description. Complaint was also made that the Canadian boatmen were not brought to this country and transhipped. They were not brought to this country for the reason that they were taken to Alexandria direct in a steamer, the *Ocean King*, which was lying in Montreal at the time she was engaged for the service, and was not sent out from London as his hon. Friend alleged. Reference had also been made to the *Storm Cock*, and it was asked why £750 per month was paid for this vessel, which was also chartered from Messrs. Ellis and Son. It was a very exceptional steamer, there being only two such in existence, and this sum had been paid because the vessel could not be obtained for less. At any rate, he thought the price paid was exceedingly reasonable. He had endeavoured to go categorically through the various charges brought forward by the hon. Member. He hoped he had shown the House that, although there might have been some little delay here and there, the carrying out of this exceedingly difficult piece of transport work, if summarized by his hon. Friend, would be found to reflect the greatest credit upon the Department, and he felt sure there was not a single firm of shipowners that could have done it so well.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY said, he felt bound to congratulate the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Caine) on the facility and rapidity with which he had acquired the habit of making a defence. One would almost think his speech had been prepared beforehand. His hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) had met the usual experience of those who exposed grievances and advocated remedies. He had been accused of and condemned for making many charges which he never made. His hon. Friend had complained not so much about the price paid for the vessels, as for the unfortunate circumstance that the vessels were useless for the purpose for which they were chartered; and, in spite of all the denials that had been given, the fact remained that it was so. For instance, the *Carthage* was a case in point; for though it was undoubtedly a very fine vessel it arrived too late; and the same remark applied to the *Recovery* —that it was not at hand when required; whilst, as to the *Notting Hill*, he did not think there could have been or could be greater bungling. The charges brought forward by his hon. Friend showed clearly that there was a want of co-operation between the Admiralty and the War Office. There was not that co-operation which insured the prompt and efficient discharge of work that had to be done. No doubt, the Expedition was successful; but anyone, in reading over the evidence and noting the mishaps which occurred, as well as the want of organization indicated by the evidence brought before the Committee, would see that they had reason to congratulate themselves that the Expedition was so successful as it really turned out to be, for it was perfectly certain, owing to this want of harmony and divided responsibility, that if we had had to face in Egypt an enemy worthy of the British arms, the result might have been different. He was glad that the question had been raised, because he believed his hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow had done good service in bringing it before the House and the country, and he thought if the Admiralty would adopt the plan practised by the firm over which his hon. Friend the Member for Greenock (Mr. Sutherland) presided it would be advantageous. He knew for a fact that great complaint had been made by the shipowners in the City, that no vessels, however good they might be, could be chartered except through one particular firm of brokers. He could not see that any harm would result from the Government adopting the practice of allowing the public to know that they were open to receive tenders for the chartering of vessels; because it seemed to him that that was the most advantageous way of carrying out work of this nature. He hoped that when the new Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Caine) brought his business qualifications to bear on the chartering of vessels and the purchase of

stores, he would not, at the end of his official career, have so many failures to account for and regret as had been disclosed in connection with the Egyptian Campaign of 1882.

DR. FARQUHARSON said, he could not help expressing his sense of the amusement he experienced at the judicious vagueness of the defence adopted by the Representative of the Admiralty. It seemed to him that that defence dealt more with the arguments not brought forward by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) than with the specific accusations which he had brought forward. The evidence upon which his hon. Friend based his case was given before the Select Committee on Transport and Commissariat which sat last Session; and, although he (Dr. Farquharson) agreed with those hon. Members who believed that the war had been a great and a brilliant success, he thought that, as had been said, anyone who had read the evidence taken before that Committee would feel convinced that that success would have been still more marked had the arrangements entered into by the Admiralty in regard to chartering merchant vessels been better carried out. He did not think that his hon. Friend the Junior Lord of the Admiralty had made out a good defence upon this point. At all events, it was quite clear that the present system was capable of great improvement, and he quite agreed that his hon. Friend (Dr. Cameron) had done good service in bringing it forward. He (Dr. Farquharson) maintained that, through these defects, great suffering had been endured by wounded and invalid men in consequence of the non-arrival in time of the ships conveying the hospital appliances and commissariat. He had heard to-night with some surprise that the Committee, of which he had the honour of being a Member last year, was not to be re-appointed during the present year. He regretted that step, for he believed that the re-appointment of that Committee would be a great advantage to the Service.

MR. GOURLEY said, he had hoped that the hon. Gentleman the Junior Lord of the Admiralty would have expressed his intention to confer some mark of honour upon the masters and officers of the Mercantile Marine who had been engaged in the service of the Government for several months during the Egyptian Campaign, and had conducted the Transport Service so satisfactorily, and without any casualty whatever. He thought that the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) had made out a very clear case in favour of the re-appointment of the Transport and Commissariat Committee of last year, and had done good service in the matter. He should support his hon. Friend if he went to a division. If the present system of chartering vessels was not based upon favouritism, it certainly was a very bad system, for the Transport Department of the Admiralty did not always engage those ships which were best adapted for transport, and in many cases they had not chosen the fastest. He thought that in all cases, excepting periods of severe pressure, ships should, as with the Emigration Commissioners, be engaged by public tender. He did not think that the defence of the Admiralty with regard to Messrs. Ellis and Son had been made out satisfactorily, because the Admiralty could, under the terms of the Post Office Mail Contracts demand the use of ships so employed from their owners.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed.

NAVY—STATE OF THE NAVY—THE SINKING FUND—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. MARRIOTT, in rising, according to Notice, to call attention to the present state of the Navy, and to move a Resolution, said: Sir, the subject of the deficiencies of the Navy has been for some time past well before the public. Special attention has been called to the subject by certain of the evening papers; and it has been discovered, in the last two or three years, that Members of the Government are particularly amenable to any expressions of opinion given in the evening papers. I do not know why they should make a distinction between morning and evening papers; but, practically, the Government has been very much carried on lately by what I may call Government by the evening papers. Hon. Members will recollect how, a short time ago, there appeared a series of articles on *The Bitter Cry* in one of the evening papers, and that the Govern-

ment immediately appointed a Commission to inquire into the question of the housing of the Metropolitan poor. About a year ago, the same paper, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, made an onslaught against the Government, and urged them to send to Egypt that unfortunate General, Gordon. Many other means had been suggested by other counsellors for dealing with the Egyptian difficulty, but they were entirely neglected, and the Government once more listened to *The Pall Mall Gazette*, and sent General Gordon out on his ill-fated mission. It was due to this paper that attention was called to naval deficiencies in October or November last; and it was certainly strange that while Admirals and various officials connected with the Admiralty had been pointing out to the Government the danger that existed, their complaints were entirely passed by; but the moment that the articles appeared in this journal, the Government paid them immediate attention, and such attention, too, that they actually came down to the House and submitted proposals for increasing the Naval Estimates by no less a sum than £5,525,000. I have no hesitation in saying that that increase appeared to be due wholly to the agitation of *The Pall Mall Gazette*. With regard to that £5,525,000, I am sure I, for one—I hope I do not show an undue curiosity—should like to know what has taken place in the official circles of the Government. Report says that a Committee of the Admiralty was appointed, and that they recommended an expenditure not of £5,525,000, but of something like £11,000,000 sterling. Now, we know that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Sir Thomas Brassey) is a Gentleman whom we can respect, and he always shows great respect to this House by coming down here with carefully prepared speeches. I had the pleasure of listening to his speech when he proposed the Estimates, and the whole of us formed the idea that a sum of £10,000,000 or £11,000,000 would be spent in remedying the deficiencies of the Navy. Yet the hon. Gentleman has now come to the lame conclusion that only £5,525,000 is to be spent, and that not at once, but to be spread over five years. That is the proposal of the Government through him, and it comes merely to this, that in five years another £1,000,000 is to be added to the Naval Estimates. That shows the Government have never realized the gravity of the naval condition of this country, and have no adequate idea of our naval defences. They are now going to meet this demand in a huckstering, and what I may call a Party, spirit, to please their own Party, both in this House and out of it, instead of recognizing the real wants of the country. Now, it is worth while inquiring why the condition of the Navy should be the subject of complaint, not merely among all the officials, but that there should be a widespread anxiety in the country and abroad, which has even moved the Government themselves to confess their shortcomings? The historian of the future, when looking back to the year 1868, and coming down to the present time, will call the interval "the Gladstone period;" for in the year 1868, the present Head of the Government became, for the first time, Prime Minister of what was then a great, powerful, and universally respected Empire. Well, in that year, the Naval Estimates were £10,896,871, or close upon £11,000,000. Now, if we go back to the happy period when the present Premier first become Prime Minister in this country, and compare it with the year 1883—and I bring it to this year, because it is the only year the statistics are collected—we find the following facts. Some of them are very satisfactory to the country, and I have no doubt if some Party historian were writing a history of the period, he would attribute all this to the benign influence of a Liberal Government. It seems that between these years the population increased by nearly 5,000,000; the increase in the imports and exports between 1868 and 1883 amounted to £210,000,000; while the increase in the value of our shipping was £1,509,000. The property assessed to the Income Tax has increased £171,082,000. Now, taking that increase, which was brought about not by the Government, but in spite of them, people would think that the Naval Estimates would have increased in proportion. Yet what is the fact? Why, I gave you just now the Naval Estimates in 1868 and in 1882-3. They were £10,662,184, and thus, far from showing an increase, they exhibit a decrease of £234,687, as compared with the Estimates of 1868. Well, now, that is an astounding statement. I do not believe

it is known, believed, or realized by the country at large. I feel certain that the evening paper to which I referred has done enormous service to the country in drawing attention to this subject, and in having able writers to bring those figures before us. I hope they have been studied by all. I am sure that, if encouraged, the Secretary of the Admiralty will speak. These figures have been in print for some time; they have astounded me, and I think they must have astounded everybody. Here is a vast increase in the population and property of the country, and a decrease in the Naval Estimates which are to provide for the defence of the country. In other words, we are increasing the wealth, but reducing the power to protect that wealth. I have no doubt—indeed, we know it is a fact—that our power has actually been diminished during the last five or six years; whilst other nations have been maintaining their expenditure and increasing their power. In the same period of time Germany, Russia, France, and Italy have increased their expenditure to the extent of £4,273,886, or about £1,000,000 each, while this country has gone backwards. We know the Prime Minister has always been a great and prominent advocate of economy. His great object has always been to present himself before the nation as above all an economist, and present to the nation a favourable Budget. I do not know exactly what the Royal Horse Guards' next Budget will be; but I imagine it will be somewhat disappointing to himself, and especially to the nation. The result of his policy will, in fact, be a serious money loss, as well as a great blow to the *prestige* of this country. There has, perhaps, been economy; but it is economy at the sacrifice of efficiency, and the sacrifice of the blood and wealth of the country. I admit that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has, by devoting all his energies and abilities to legislation, produced some good measures—some which were sensational, and some of which were harmful and detrimental to the interests of the nation—but in devoting all his energies to legislation he has neglected administration and government, and he has forgotten that there is someone else to consider, for in a great Empire like this, not legislating alone for 35,000,000 of people, but for something like 300,000,000, administration and government are of far greater importance than the legislation which has been going on in this country for the last 15 or 16 years; and, moreover, the whole of the right hon. Gentleman's Administration has been permeated by this narrow spirit of economy bearing everything down with it. If we could only get behind the scenes, we should find, I have not the least doubt, that the officials at the War Office and the Admiralty have done their duty to the State by pointing out the requirements of their Services and the state into which everything was falling for want of the necessary supplies, and that these officials have given proper advice; and we should also find that, at the Treasury, the Estimates of these officials have been sifted and cut down, and the country sacrificed to the supposed necessities of the Department. The object—the paltry object—of the Treasury is to get everything cheap, so as to show the country, if possible, that the Government of the present Prime Minister is much cheaper than the Government of other Ministries. I regret, however, that I am also compelled to reflect upon the Administration of the last Government, which also stinted the Services owing to the baneful influence of the Prime Minister It has proved to be a very difficult thing to resist that influence in this House. You will all remember a Gentleman who was highly respected by every person and by every Party in this House. He was the type of a true English Gentleman, distinguished for his honest opinion and plainness of speech and his inability to say anything which was not straightforward and true. I refer to the late Mr. Ward Hunt. Well, when he became First Lord of the Admiralty, and upon examining into the state of the Navy, and seeing its condition, he blurted out the truth, and made use of those famous words—"It is a phantom Navy." We know the sensation which those words produced at the time; but we also know that pressure was brought to bear upon Mr. Ward Hunt, who was afterwards induced to admit that he might have spoken too strongly, though there appears to be no doubt now that he spoke the truth, but that the influence of the economist was too strong for him. The late Prime Minister inherited

the same evil traditions of 1868, and the Navy again suffered, so that, at the present time, we are in a very dangerous position, and our naval strength is very small compared with that of other nations. The public want to know the truth with regard to the Navy. The present Ministry has no policy; they only seek to catch what they think to be public opinion, so as to get a majority in the House and the country. What is really required is that public opinion should be guided and led by those who conduct the Government of the country. Instead of pandering to public opinion, a Ministry should lead, and, if necessary, oppose public opinion. Instead of trying to catch public opinion they should have a policy of their own, and more especially they should devote themselves to keeping up the naval strength of the country. What, I ask, is the result of all this spirit of economy, marring our administrative power? Why, that, at the present moment, this country is only slightly superior to France in first-class iron-clads, whilst it is behindhand in guns and torpedo boats; and in four years' time, at the present rate of progress in both countries, we shall be equal in iron-clads, and still inferior in guns and torpedoes. We have at the present time something like 30 first-rate iron-clads to France's 19. At the end of the year we shall have 37, and France 30, and in four years each Power will have 48. But many of these vessels are older than the French, and older than the time which I think Lord Northbrook has set down for the efficient life of an iron-clad—namely, 17 years. After 17 years, we are told, they become obsolete and useless. In that respect we shall see that we have only 14 first-class iron-clads built within the last 17 years; whilst France has 17; and, at the present time, we have seven launched and completed, whilst France has eight. Both nations have six on the stocks, and I admit that we are promised four more; but the promise is not to be fulfilled for four years, and the Navy of France will continue to be equal, if not superior, to our own. I have only been referring to first-class ships; but in torpedo boats and guns there can be no doubt of the superiority of other nations over ourselves. In torpedo boats we are far behind France, Germany, Italy, and Russia; that is a scandal to the Naval Administration of this country. This country has more valuable shipping ports than any country in the world, and torpedo boats are the most available for their defence. But these are practically undefended at the present time. What caused me to put down my Motion was this—that I felt that this country had for years neglected her Navy. She has not spent enough money upon it; and the consequence is that, whilst other nations are advancing, we are standing still, or rather going back in proportion to our requirements. What we want is statesmen to rule the nation, who have courage of their opinions, and who will be prepared to form and guide public opinion, instead of being its slaves. We see how Prince Bismarck, in the Parliament of Germany, is not afraid even to oppose public opinion.

MR. GOURLEY said, he rose to Order. What had the doings of Prince Bismarck to do with the subject before the House?

MR. SPEAKER: I am afraid the hon. and learned Member is somewhat wandering from the subject, which is that the House go into Committee of Supply.

MR. MARRIOTT: I merely wished to point out how Prince Bismarck, in advocating the establishment of lines of steamers for Australia and elsewhere, has the courage of his convictions; and we want statesmen who are capable of forming opinions, and of showing that they have the strength to maintain them. I consider that I am doing a kindness to the Ministry in pointing out what are the true feelings of the people and the real wants of the country. Anybody can see that by our neglect of the Services we have lost power and influence in our negotiations with Foreign Powers, and that by our timidity we have encouraged their aggressiveness. If we had a larger Fleet we should have kept our former position as mistress of the seas, and the country would not have had to put up with and suffer the many insults and rebuffs as we have done during the last few months. If we are to be respected we must be strong; and I say the proposals made by the Government last December are not sufficient to meet the requirements of the case. We want to spend something like £7,000,000 or £10,000,000 at once, in order to bring us up to the relative position which we held in 1868; and

however we may raise the money, whether we borrow, or suspend the Sinking Fund, it would be a most economical outlay in the end, for it would place Her Majesty's Government, when negotiating with other Powers, in such a position of strength, that they would be able to command peace. If Her Majesty's Government had taken up a firm attitude, and announced some time ago that they were prepared to spend at once £10,000,000 upon our Navy, I do not think we should have had the rebuffs we have had from Germany, or the encroachments we have had to submit to from Russia. I hope we shall no longer fetter our strength for the sake of the miserable contingencies of Party Government, and thus continue to bring a great nation into disrepute, besides causing a great and unnecessary expenditure in blood and treasure. In conclusion I beg to thank the House for the manner in which it has heard me. I believe sincerely in the spirit of the Motion which I have to lay before the House, and therefore I propose—

"That considering the present acknowledged insufficiency of the British Navy, and the great depression of the Shipbuilding Trade, it is advisable to defer the payments made in respect of the National Debt for one year, in order to apply the Surplus Revenue of the Nation to the building and repairing of Ships in the National Dockyards and private Shipbuilding Yards."

MR. SPEAKER said, that, a Motion having already been made and negatived, the Resolution of the hon. and learned Member could not be put from the Chair.

MR. CARBUTT said, he had no intention to follow the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) into the many political subjects which he had touched upon; but he wished to say that there was reason for the great alarm and apprehension felt in the country that we were not now fully prepared to meet our enemies in case the necessity for doing so should arise. He was certain the 2,000,000 voters who had been enfranchised would take care that the Government looked more after the protection of this country than they had been doing of late; and he believed they would not protest against any reasonable expenditure of money for the preservation of the honour of the Empire. The Government should never bark unless they were prepared to bite, and they should never threaten unless they were prepared to strike. His own impression was that with regard to guns we were in a very backward state; indeed, it seemed that for some years past the country was altogether indifferent about the matter, the consequence being that we had rapidly fallen behind other countries with respect to it. But when he remembered all the difficulties and trials which the French underwent at the time of the occupation of their country by the Germans, and reflected that perhaps the same thing might happen to us at a future time, he thought it was necessary that that subject should be inquired into very closely. We had no reliable guns, and Lord Northbrook himself had admitted, in a speech made in "another place," that there had been a most regrettable delay in supplying breech-loading guns for the Navy. The House ought to inquire whose fault that was owing to, and should take care that that state of things should not continue. As a manufacturing nation, he considered we ought to be able to maintain our own, and not be dependent for the supply of our guns on foreign nations. On a former occasion he had said that at present they had not one single large breech-loading steel gun that was capable of doing any good work. He desired to qualify that remark, because on the day that he made it a trial took place in Her Majesty's Ship *Collingwood* with two 43-ton steel guns that were prepared for the *Edinburgh*; and since then two more had been placed on board ship. So that they had four of those 43-ton guns that were able to fire to a certain extent; but, judging from the account that had been given of the trial, they could hardly consider those guns in a condition to be of any service to them at present, as they were unable to fire these guns with full powder charges. It was monstrous that they should go on building those guns on the assumption that they would do so and so; and not only that, but that they should make 63-ton guns and 110-ton guns on the same principle without thoroughly testing them, and satisfying themselves that they were really capable of doing the work that should be expected from them. Those 43-ton guns were originally designed to fire with 400 lbs. of powder, whereas at present they fired

with only 293 lbs. His contention was that the Government had never encouraged the manufacturers of this country, but had entirely ignored them. The firm of Messrs. Whitworth, although it had never been able to get a single order from Her Majesty's Government until lately, had continued to make guns for the Brazilian and other Governments, and had done very good work. He did not blame the present Government, who, he believed, had done all they possibly could. The late Government was as much to blame as anybody. What he blamed was the system. When it was admitted by the heads of both the Army and the Navy that the Woolwich gun was a failure, and the system had broken down, arrangements ought to have been made for the adoption of a better system. A remarkable paper had been read at the United Service Institution by Colonel Maitland, the head of the Gun Department at Woolwich. He stated that up to 1875 the British Artillery was as good as that of any other nation. Then, he said, there came a period of stagnation; and since that we had been endeavouring to make up our leeway. Science advanced so fast that the Power which waited the longest was always in the best position, supposing it were not caught napping. In effect, this was an important admission that we had been left behind by other nations; and it was a fortunate thing that we had not been caught napping. If we were to maintain our position as leaders and colonizers, it was necessary that we should be fully prepared to maintain our own. From another passage in the paper it appeared that the author admitted that we had obtained the benefit of German experience in adopting steel, and of French experience in adopting breech-loaders. Now, to his knowledge, the Germans were making steel guns 25 years ago, and the Russians 20 years ago. The French were only awakened to the fact that they were not in a position to compete with their neighbours by the occurrence of the Franco-German War. It did seem strange that we should be the leading nation in the manufacture of steel, and in the application of the inventions of Bessemer and Siemens, and yet that we should be 15 or 20 years behind other nations in adopting steel guns. Fortunately, Sir Joseph Whitworth had continued his researches, and he was glad to find that the Government had given orders to Sir Joseph Whitworth for his material. In consideration of the number of guns which had burst on different occasions, and of the fact he had before referred to, as stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), that the Woolwich gun had failed, it was necessary that all our large guns should be thoroughly tested, almost to destruction, so that their weak points might be discovered, and some definite decision arrived at as to which was to be the gun of the future, for we ought not to go on making guns without knowing what we were doing. On a previous occasion we made 100 Armstrong guns; we then tried one, which failed, and nearly the whole 100 were wasted. He would press the Government to test one of these large guns, if possible to destruction, and let us know whether we had got a thoroughly trustworthy system. The smaller guns had given a great deal of trouble. An 80-ton gun had burst at Gibraltar; it was one of four bought from Sir William Armstrong. These four guns cost £86,000; and one of them having burst, it was only natural to suppose that the others might do so. As long as there were any doubts on the subject men could not work these guns with the confidence which they ought to have. There had been a Committee of Inquiry and experiment, and it appeared to have tried numerous experiments on the 6-inch gun, one of which burst on Her Majesty's Ship *Active*. What he asked was that some Committee should be appointed in the matter, so that all guns should be thoroughly tested, and a Report upon the subject made to Parliament; for his impression was that our whole system of manufacture was wrong, and that we had never attempted to make trials of any gun even when we had the chance. When we purchased the *Neptune* there were four 9-inch steel guns, made by Messrs. Whitworth and Co. The right hon. Member for Westminster, who was then at the head of the Admiralty, promised that they should be tried; but they had not been tried; they had been taken out and sent to Woolwich to be put aside as old iron, and the cost of replacing them was £120,000.

For these things he did not blame the right hon. Gentleman; but he blamed the permanent Officials at the Admiralty, who were too strong for their political Chief. It was this anomaly that we must remedy if possible. He believed that the present Surveyor General of Ordnance was doing all he could to rectify all that was wrong; but he was not a gun-maker, and he ought to have some official who could give him sound advice. He had nothing of the kind; but he was dependent upon an Inspector General of Gunnery, who had not had much experience. He was told that the last gentleman appointed was junior to every manufacturer in the service of the Government. The appointments were made for five years, and that time was barely sufficient for a responsible official to obtain the experience he required. We ought not to go on spending millions with our organization in its present chaotic state. If we would let the Admiralty get guns where they liked we should produce something like competition between the two Departments; and this would sharpen the intellects of both, with the result of benefiting the whole country. France had formerly adopted much the same system that we had, and had only one Government Department; but when the war broke out the French awoke to the fact that they were not in a position to cope with the Germans. Since that time the French had done what he should very much like to see the English Government do; they had encouraged private manufacturers to put down plant, so that in case of war the Government could apply to them for help. The Government had sent round to foreign manufacturers to obtain information with reference to guns. He believed this country had nothing to learn from foreign manufacturers; and that if, instead of going abroad, the Government had gone to manufacturers in this country, they would have found them in a position to supply any demand made upon them. An American Gun Commission had visited England, France, Germany, and Russia, and the conclusion they came to was that the French system was now the best. The French system, he might say, encouraged private manufacturers, and took advantage of the Government establishments to make experiments. He would suggest that a Committee should be appointed to whom manufacturers might send guns to be tried. There were already two or three guns which had been brought under the notice of the authorities, but which were untried. If the Government would adopt that course the country might soon be put in a position to cope with any other nation. The matter of guns had, no doubt, frequently delayed the building of ships; but if the Admiralty manufactured their own guns, or, as he had said, went where they chose for them, it would bring about competition between the two Departments, and with great benefit to the country. Further, experiments should also be made with respect to the powder; and manufacturers in this country should be encouraged to compete in the matter, with a view of arriving at some clear and definite decision as to the best powder to use, for that which was now in general use was by no means satisfactory in every respect. He had been told that, if a manufacturer wished to have any powder tried, he had to pay the Government £10 for every shot fired with the powder. That charge ought to be abolished altogether. An effort should be made to encourage firms to manufacture powder which would not be inferior to the German powder now in use. His object in making these remarks was to encourage the authorities in well-doing, and impress upon them the uselessness of expending money upon steel works at Woolwich.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, the hon. Member for Monmouth (Mr. Carbutt) had stated that both the late Secretary of State for War and he himself had asserted that the Woolwich gun had broken down. He found no reference whatever in *Hansard* to anything of the kind, and, to the best of his belief, he made no such remarks as that to which the hon. Member had referred. What he did say was that circumstances had rendered it necessary that there should be a breech-loading gun instead of a muzzle-loading gun adopted in the Navy, as the increased charges which had to be used required that the gun should be longer than could be loaded from the muzzle on board ship. The then Government, with the advice of their professional officers, determined to have a breech-loading gun for the large ships then in course of construction with the greater power which experience

showed to be attainable. He, however, and his right hon. and gallant Friend the Secretary of State for War (Colonel Stanley) never suggested that the Woolwich gun, as a gun, had broken down, or that Woolwich was incapable of furnishing guns of the kind required. He felt bound to deny the truth of many of the statements which had been made about him and his administration at the Admiralty in the course of the debate. He, of course, was prepared to submit to criticism; but when matters of fact were concerned the truth should be known. It had been stated that in France the Navy had a complete factory of their own for the supply of guns. If the Government of this country adopted the French system they would have to establish an independent factory, probably much larger than the Woolwich factory was at the present time, and also reserve to themselves the power to fall back upon the private trade. That, of course, implied a very large expenditure of public money and a new departure, which he supposed the Government would take into their consideration.

SIR JOHN HAY said, he thought that the hon. Member for Monmouth (Mr. Carbutt) had done a great service in bringing forward the question of guns. He thought it would be a very bad plan for the Navy to make its own guns; but until the Ordnance Department became a manufacturing Department, with permission to obtain guns from private manufacturers, they would have no satisfactory supply of guns for this country. He was astonished that Secretaries of State for War should accept the responsibility of the enormous Estimates which they brought forward, because a large portion of their Estimates was for manufacturing purposes. The Estimates for the manufacture of guns ought to be kept separate, and there should be a Minister of the Crown for the Department to whom the country would look for an efficient weapon. The guns of this country, both for ships and for the defence of their ports and coaling stations, were in a most deplorable condition; and if war was to break out they would find themselves almost disarmed, and with the necessity of spending millions of money on a system not yet determined upon. He heard with great satisfaction the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), who had not intervened hitherto in naval debates, and who pointed out that the Navy was causing the greatest anxiety to the country. Had it been in his power to move the Resolution which stood in his name he should have done so; but the Forms of the House prevented him bringing it forward. He should, however, like to enforce the sentiments which that Motion contained. The Motion read as follows:—

"That the condition of the Navy causes the greatest anxiety, and that, in order to restore the Naval superiority necessary for our National existence, this House is of opinion that no Naval Estimate is satisfactory which does not enable the Admiralty to complete without delay, as an addition to those now building, thirty-three completely armoured iron-clad ships, twenty-five armed cruisers, three hundred torpedo vessels; and, further, for the increase of the Marine forces to twenty thousand men, and boys to seven thousand."

He wished to say a few words upon the subject of that Motion. It was quite evident that the country was anxious about the condition of the Navy, and that anxiety was justified, because the Admiralty had shown not only anxiety, but vacillation of purpose. What confidence could be felt in a Naval Administration whose mouthpiece in the other House stated last summer that if £4,000,000 were given to the Admiralty in excess of the £10,000,000 in the Estimates, they would not know what to do with it; then, some four months afterwards, they said that £11,000,000 was necessary; then that they would be satisfied with £5,000,000; and then, when the Navy Estimates were introduced, asked only for £1,500,000? It was said that the proper course to take would be to appoint a Royal Commission. Last year and the year before he suggested the appointment of a Committee of the House; and he believed last year his right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) supported him. The reason why he desired that there should be a Committee of the House at that time was that the public mind was not alive to the question, and because the information which might be obtained by that Committee would, perhaps, have awakened anxiety. But it was too late now to ask for Committees or Commissions. He thought it desirable at the time to have the First Lord of the Admiralty, who was responsible for the defence of the country, before the Committee, to tell them whether he was satisfied that the Navy was suffi-

cient; that it had proper guns; and that, in the event of a war, he would be able to make such arrangements as would be adequate for the protection of India, the Colonies, their commerce, and their own shores. But now the insufficiency of the Navy was confessed. The Admiralty confessed it. He saw with great regret distinguished officials, one of whom had a seat in "another place," and who was able to explain to Parliament the wants of the country, satisfied to remain at the Board and justify the vacillation which had prevailed there from the month of July last year down to the present time. He held that the gallant officers at the Admiralty were bound to resign their position if they could not obtain from the State that which they believed to be necessary for the defence of the country. That had been done by other officers before with good effect. In 1868 the defences of the country were insufficient, and two Lords of the Admiralty — the late Admiral Seymour and himself—having seats in that House were unable to defend the Navy Estimates. They placed their resignation in the hands of the Prime Minister. The result was that the First Lord was replaced by another, a new Board was constituted, and eight ships were put on the stocks, instead of three or four which were before determined upon. That was entirely in consequence of the resignation of two Lords of the Admiralty who had seats in that House. It would be much to the public advantage if officers who had recommended £11,000,000 at one time and £5,000,000 at another should have resigned Office when they found the sum so greatly reduced, as it afterwards was, not in consequence of their own convictions on the subject, but owing to the pressure of the Treasury. His hon. Friend (Mr. Carbutt) had alluded to France as the country with which they ought to compare their Fleet. At the present moment they had 19 ships built and building that could go more than 14 knots, while France had 26 ships of the same class. In addition to these 19 vessels, they had 14 which were efficient and fit for battle, while the French had 12 ships of that description It was, however, impossible to consider this last class as efficient for the protection of the country, and, therefore, the first figures held good. Now, he had suggested that they should build 33 new ships capable of going more than 14 knots, because then they would have 52 vessels of that class, or twice the number the French had. The hon. Member for Perthshire Sir Donald Currie in December said he was satisfied Great Britain should have a Naval Force sufficient to contend against any three Powers, and double the Navy of France. He was urging the Admiralty to follow that judicious advice. He had spoken of the French Navy; but when he added the Italian Navy he found they had a grand total of 23 iron-clad ships, which, if added to the French total, made it more necessary that the number he had suggested should be added to the Navy of this country. Upon that point he might remark that the Secretary to the Admiralty, on the 6th of December, 1884, laid on the Table of the House a Return. He had promised to amend that Return; but for some reason, by the Return before the House, it appeared the Admiralty were building 17 iron-clad ships, when they were in reality only building six. That was somewhat misleading; and he therefore thought it right to point out to the House the great error into which they would be led if they accepted that Return. It might be asked what did they want 52 iron-clad ships for, putting aside the question that this country might have to meet the combined Fleets of any two nations, and putting aside the question of the protection of the commerce of the country? At that moment there was what was called a Channel Fleet; but two only of the ships which composed it were ships that could steam, or could defend themselves against any of the first-class iron-clads of other Powers. It might be said that there were a great number of ships in the Coastguard. They might be good enough for training men in, but everyone knew that the armour was thin; and, practically, the only iron-clad ships of any value were the two in the Channel Fleet, the three under repair, and the eight in the Mediterranean. Of course, he did not include in that number the ships upon the stocks; but of the nine ships on the stocks only two had any date mentioned at which they were likely to be ready. That being so, the country had nothing to rely upon at home in the event of war. At that moment there were in China three Russian iron-clads, all very

good ships, and four French ships. A war was going on in China, and a question of blockade might arise, and either the French or the Russian Squadron could come down on Hong Kong and insist upon getting supplies from there, which this country, as neutral, had no right to give. Was it right that war should be going on where this country had such enormous interests, and that there should not be a single ship which could say—"You cannot have supplies, for we will not allow you." If at that moment either of the two Powers he had mentioned went to war with this country and sank a vessel in the Suez Canal, the coasts of India, China, and the Colonies were at once at their mercy. Therefore, it was the business of this country to take care for the protection of all these places, as well as to keep up its good name as a neutral, that it should have a sufficient police of the sea to protect them. Their great Colonies were ready to bear the cost of building iron-clads themselves if the Admiralty would only set them the example by providing ships for the defence of their own coasts and trade. There was another point upon which he should like some information, and that was the condition of the boilers of the ships which were now available. The information he had endeavoured to obtain, and which he believed was correct, was such that he believed there were not 15 ships which had boilers which did not require almost immediate change, and it was a very well-known thing that the changing of a boiler could not be effected in a day. So far he had spoken of the iron-clad ships; but an iron-clad fleet was not an efficient fleet, for an iron-clad ship required at least two attendants. It required a coaling vessel, and it required a vessel of the *Scout* class, for the purpose of keeping off torpedo vessels and other work. There ought to be 104 of these vessels to attend upon their iron-clads, and a certain number of ships to be employed as rams, three or four of which should be attached to every fleet. Torpedo vessels were also wanted, and colliers to supply the fleet with coal. All these ships were necessary; yet none of them were at present being prepared. He saw with dismay the activity of Russia and Germany in the manufacture of torpedo boats. The Admiralty talked of building 10, which would be about a sufficient number to protect the Thames. Each of their harbours ought to possess a flotilla of those boats. Altogether, 300 would not be too large a number to build. As to masted iron-clads, he believed that they ought no longer to be built. Much cost would be saved by building mastless iron-clads only. In considering how much money might fairly be demanded for naval purposes, they ought to remember that in 1860, and the following years, £12,500,000 were annually voted for the Navy, out of which £1,000,000 only was spent on the dead weight. Now the annual Vote did not exceed £10,000,000, £2,000,000 of which were spent on the dead weight. In recent years £46,000,000, which ought to have been spent on the Navy, had thus been saved. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer would disgorge some of that plunder there would be plenty of money to spend on the Navy. As to armoured cruisers, there ought to be four of them to each of the six great lines of ocean communication. It would be wise to build 30. In regard to the Marines, 12,400 were the number now borne on the Estimates. Seven thousand of these were necessary for the service of the Fleet, while the remainder were on shore learning their military duties. Now, however, the Marines were called upon to serve elsewhere than at sea, many of them being at that moment with the Army at Suakin. They performed their duties right well; but 12,400 men were not sufficient for the services which they were now called upon to perform, and their strength ought to be raised to 20,000. Steps ought to be taken to increase the number of boys in training for the Navy, and a reserve of stokers ought to be formed. At present, their complement of stokers was deficient by 3,000 or 4,000; and he feared that in an emergency they would be unable to obtain the necessary number from the Merchant Navy, unless they should, unfortunately, be set free by the blockade of their ports and the destruction of their merchant ships.

MR. BRAND said, he was not aware that the question of armaments was to be brought forward, or he would have been able to have given a detailed answer. The right hon. and gallant Member (Sir John Hay) had argued that it would be a very good change if the Ordnance Department were made into a separate Department to supply the Navy

as well as the Army. He might remind his right hon. and gallant Friend that the Admiralty had already been made responsible for the gun mountings, and that the question of the construction of guns was now being seriously considered by the Heads of that Department. It was true, as was complained, that the Government paid a high price for what was known as cocoa powder to the German manufacturers; but it was a special article, and it had been decided by the Ordnance Committee that it was the best powder which could be used for heavy ordnance. His hon. Friend the Member for Monmouth Districts (Mr. Carbutt) appeared to labour under a misapprehension on several points. He complained that the Heads of the Departments at Woolwich, and the officials who advised the Secretary of State in those matters, were not sufficiently experienced. The fact, however, was that the present Director of Artillery was an officer of great experience; and Colonel Maitland, the Superintendent of the Royal Gun Factory, was also a distinguished artillerist. It was true that this official was only appointed for five years; but he might be retained in his post for a longer period if the Secretary of State should think it desirable. His hon. Friend was also mistaken in saying that there was not a Committee of scientific or skilled officers to whom important inventions could be referred. Such a Committee had been appointed by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and was now sitting.

MR. CARBUTT: I did not say there was no such Committee; but that important inventions were not tried.

MR. BRAND observed that his hon. Friend was equally wrong there, for during the last few months an officer had submitted the design of a new gun to the War Office, and had been given every encouragement. His gun, when made, would be submitted to the Ordnance Department. He did not complain of criticism, which was often valuable and encouraging; but when attacks were made upon the Government for delay in the manufacture of breech-loading ordnance, it ought to be remembered that the French Government adopted breech-loading ordnance 16 years ago; whereas we had only adopted it during the last five or six years. He did not, however, think matters were so serious as his hon. Friend supposed. The Government had done their best to encourage private enterprize, and especially in the direction of steel making. But time was required for the development of manufactures of that kind, as much capital was expended, and manufacturers wanted some assurance that their capital would meet with an adequate return. He thought he could say that the manufacturers at Sheffield and Newcastle were satisfied with the assurances which the Government had given. The result was that now, within a few weeks, besides Whitworth, Firth, Cammel, and Vickers, of Sheffield and Elswick, would be able to supply the Government with heavy forgings. Whitworth was at present able to build up guns for the Navy, and Vickers would be able in a very few weeks to do the same thing; while the Government had spent £100,000 in plant to increase the manufacturing capacity at Woolwich. There only remained one question for him to mention, though, perhaps, it was the most important of all—namely, the question of the design and pattern of their guns. He was sorry the hon. Member for Wigan Mr. A. F. Egerton had hinted that the Committee which had recently been appointed implied dissatisfaction with the guns now manufacturing for the Royal Navy. But there was no such object and no such fear. The system of manufacture and the designs employed had never been called in question. It appeared to the Secretary of State that it would be of very great advantage if a Committee were appointed, consisting of members of the Ordnance Committee and of gentlemen of very great experience outside the Department. The Committee consisted of Sir William Armstrong, Captain Noble, Mr. Lees (representing Messrs. Whitworth), and Sir Frederick Abel, besides Sir Frederick Bramwell, Mr. Barlow, and other members of the Ordnance Department. All the recommendations made by the Committee were completed, and would be forwarded to-day; but the Report itself had not yet been furnished. The recommendations that had been made would be embodied in it. They had recommended that certain guns of present design should be strengthened in the chase with a view to their using slow-burning powder. Guns of future construction would be adapted for this powder. The Committee had recommended that no

alteration should be made in the 12-inch guns, mark II., or the 6-inch guns, mark III., forming the armament of the *Conqueror* and *Colossus*. But, speaking generally, with the exception of some slight alterations for strengthening guns, the Committee approved of the present system of gun construction. The Ordnance Department, he thought, had received some rather unmerited abuse. He was quite convinced that there were no officers more capable and more thoroughly experienced than the present Constructor of Artillery and the present Superintendent of the Royal Gun Factory. They were working in cordial co-operation with the great private firms; and he felt perfectly sure that, with the help of the private trade, encouraged as it now was by the Government and the resources of Woolwich Arsenal, the Government would very shortly be able to complete the breech-loading armament of the Navy.

MR. BIRKBECK, in rising to call attention to the increased depredations by foreign trawling vessels on the English drift-net fisheries on the East Coast, and the losses incurred therefrom by owners and fishermen, and to the inadequate protection provided by the Admiralty Authorities for enforcing the provisions of the North Sea Fisheries Convention, said, he must apologize for detaining the House a very few minutes while he referred to a grievance which his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty thoroughly realized and appreciated. That grievance was the totally insufficient number and the unsuitable class of vessels provided by the Admiralty Authorities for putting into force the provisions of the North Sea Fisheries Convention. During the autumn months there was a fleet of large fishing vessels, amounting to about 1,000, fishing in the immediate vicinity of the East Coast; and there was also, he regretted to say, a number of foreign trawling smacks, which did an enormous amount of damage, and the Admiralty afforded insufficient and unsatisfactory protection to their English vessels. On one occasion an owner in one night lost no less than £400; another owner lost £600; and last autumn it was estimated that the owners of Lowestoft suffered to the extent of £10,000, and Yarmouth only a little less, so that the House would now see the importance of adequate protection being given to this large fleet. The Admiralty Authorities knew perfectly well that the North Sea Fisheries Convention was passed two years ago, and that an Act of Parliament was passed in 1883 embodying the provisions of that Convention; and under the Articles of the Convention there was special reference to the duties of providing cruisers for the protection of their fishing vessels. But no provision had as yet been made for that purpose by the Admiralty. The Secretary to the Admiralty was fully aware that a chart had been handed in to the Admiralty in May last, indicating the very spots in which those depredations had taken place, and naming the time when the cruisers ought to be on the grounds for the protection of our fleet. Another complaint was that the vessels which were sent out by the Admiralty did not carry out the duties they were sent to perform. He might mention that one of those cruisers—namely, the *Cherub*, instead of being out on the fishing-grounds and protecting the vessels, remained in harbour doing absolutely nothing from October 31 till November 7. In another instance she was four days in harbour. He therefore regretted that the commanders of those vessels did not carry out the orders given them by the Admiralty as he believed, but remained in harbour instead of being out on the fishing grounds. If trawling smacks remained out in the North Sea for eight weeks, surely Her Majesty's cruisers ought to be able to do the same. He would especially urge the Admiralty Authorities, without delay, to make the necessary arrangements for providing at least four sailing cruisers for the district referred to, and not steam tenders, as the latter did more harm than the Belgian vessels with their "devils." He would now refer to a communication from the secretary of the Drift-Net Protection Society, in which that gentleman spoke of—

> "The arrival of fishing boats with great loss of gear, caused by foreign trawlers."

He added—

> "I have every reason to believe that a Belgian trawler of Ostend (No. 200), done £500 of damage alone. Some fishermen are laying their boats up, having lost all their gear."

The hon. Member also referred to a daring outrage which had been perpetrated by an Ostend trawler, which crossed the

nets of one of our fishing luggers, the *Nil Desperandum*, about midnight, cutting the warps. As she continued her course, the master and one of the crew went in a boat to pursue her, and obtain, if possible, her number. The crew, as the boat neared the trawler, could see two men coming up out of the cabin with guns, and when within 30 yards of her one of the men discharged his piece at the men in the boat. They at once fell to the bottom, fearing they might be killed. They could, however, see that the other man stood ready with his gun to fire, and they accordingly let the boat drift away in order to escape. On arriving in port Baxter, the master and owner, at once went to the Custom House and made depositions. The depredations were wholesale; 20 fishing-boats having lost 1,770 nets. That showed the absolute necessity of an adequate number of Government cutters being sent to protect the boats; and it was indispensable that each cruiser should have as pilots fishermen who know the ground. Those cutters would also act as admirable training vessels for the Navy, and would be able to render valuable service in the saving of life. If the protection were not granted, the result would be that the fishermen would be driven to provide armed cruisers themselves, and there would be open war between them and the foreign vessels. He had only attempted to give a bare outline of what was going on at the fishing-grounds. He, therefore, called upon the Government to do for English fishermen what every other country was doing for theirs. It was a duty which England alone neglected; and it was nothing short of a scandal that a Maritime Power like England should so utterly neglect an important trade that did so much for the food supply of the nation.

MR. SAMPSON LLOYD drew the attention of the Admiralty to the case of the old navigating officers of the Fleet, who had complained for a long time of their position, but whose complaint had not received the amount of attention which it deserved. Some years ago a change was made in the Service by which no new navigating officers were appointed, and by which their duties were transferred in many cases to executive officers. The duties of those officers were extremely important. The navigating officers were responsible for the safe navigation of the very valuable ships of the Navy. They had to take them into and out of action, and steer them through intricate channels; and if any mishap occurred the navigating officer was responsible, and was severely punished. What those officers felt deeply was the position of subordination and inferiority in which they were placed in comparison with the youngest officers of the executive branch. It had been alleged that this subordinate position in which they were placed was what had always been the case. He believed that was not so. Several appointments which used to be filled up by the appointment of navigating officers had been taken away from that class. The scale of their retirement was also very much less than that of the executive branch. They complained that while the Royal Marines, the Paymasters, the Engineers, and others had been allowed opportunities of stating their grievances before the authorities, no such opportunities had been permitted to the navigating officers. For years past none of those officers had been sent for, while representatives of the other classes had. He asked the Secretary to the Admiralty to allow some of those officers to see him privately to state their grievances, and to answer any questions he might put to them. It was not to the interest of the country that any class of officers in Her Majesty's Service should be allowed at that time to remain discontented and dissatisfied.

MR. A. F. EGERTON said, the Surveyor General of Ordnance had referred to a letter which he wrote the other day to the newspapers as to the appointment of a Committee. No one objected to the appointment or to the constitution of that Committee; but when the Surveyor General told the House that its appointment would not lead to delay, he ventured to join issue with him, and to say that the appointment of the Committee would be, without doubt, the cause of some of the delay. The Surveyor General had told the House also that the new guns were to be strengthened in various parts. But how were the guns to be strengthened without causing delay? What he wished to impress upon the House was that it was of the greatest importance that there should be no delay in arming the new turret ships, and

any measure which caused delay was to be regretted. All that he asked for was that the House and the country should be placed in possession of the fullest information as to the condition of these new guns.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF supported the hon. Member for South Warwickshire (Mr. Sampson Lloyd) in the appeal which he made in favour of the navigating officers of the Navy. He believed they were a most deserving class of men who had been neglected by the Admiralty for a long time past. There were several other cases with regard to the different classes of officers in the Dockyards who had for a long time been memorializing the Admiralty with a view of securing some improvement in their position, but who had not yet received any reply to their application. He referred especially to the established skilled labourers in the Dockyards. [The hon. Member proceeded to read a letter from a distinguished Admiral, who pointed out the respects in which England was mainly deficient in a naval sense.] He was not at liberty to mention the Admiral's name; but would say that he was one of the most distinguished officers of the day, and spoke with the authority of all those naval officers with whom he was in constant communication. The letter said that it seemed incredible to the writer that, in the present critical state of affairs with Russia, this country was making no preparations whatever. No one knew how soon the Navy might be wanted in the Baltic, and that they ought to be in a position to bombard Russian forts if necessary, asking, at the same time, whether they had the ships, the guns, or the men necessary. The writer expressed the opinion that they would find themselves greatly deficient in torpedo vessels, of which the Russians had 94 in the Baltic. He had quoted this letter in order to show the strong opinion which prevailed among naval officers on the subject of the Navy. If they had to trust merely to such agreements as that foreshadowed by the Prime Minister to defend the country against Russia, they would have but a broken reed to rely upon.

MR. PULESTON joined in the appeal on behalf of the navigating officers of the Fleet.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, England was at that moment face to face with the gravest political danger, being threatened with war with one of the Great Powers of Europe; and, as must be admitted on all hands, England was no match, at sea, for several combinations of two Powers against her. If she lost her naval supremacy, England could, in two or three months, be brought to her knees by a combination of hostile Navies, starving her into submission. It remained for this Government, which had brought the Army to its present deplorable condition, so that a Force of 25,000 men could not be sent abroad without depleting every regiment in the country, to allow the Navy to sink into its present inferiority. He hoped that the Government would now address themselves to carrying out the defence of the coaling stations, to the building of a large fleet of torpedo-boats, and to the addition of at least six fast sea-going cruisers to the strength of the Navy.

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY said, a number of important speeches had been made on this Motion; but he hoped that hon. Members would not consider that he was showing them any disrespect if he refrained from making a separate reply to each, as he anticipated making a very full answer in introducing the Navy Estimates. He might, however, correct the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) on a matter of fact. It was not true, as surmised, that the Admiralty made a demand on the Cabinet to the extent of £11,000,000. In November they put forward a proposal for increased shipbuilding, and the Estimates which he was about to move made ample provision for carrying out the plans submitted on that occasion. When he made the statement on the part of the Government in December, other matters besides shipbuilding were referred to. It was intended to make provision for accelerating the construction of steel guns for the Navy. This item did not fall under these Estimates; but if hon. Gentlemen turned to the Army Estimates, they would find that a large addition was made in those Estimates for strengthening the Navy in the matter of guns. The hon. Member for North Norfolk (Mr. Birkbeck) had called attention to the question of the protection of the fisheries. On behalf of the Admiralty, he (Sir Thomas Brassey) deeply regretted the depredations which

were committed by foreign vessels on the East Coast fisheries; and also the failure, if there had been a failure, on the part of the commanders of gun-boats to be present at the rendezvous, which were pointed out by those representing the fisheries. He could promise that the Admiralty would consult with the Admiral Superintendent of the Reserves, and would do all that lay in their power to give protection to the fisheries. The hon. Member had spoken against the employment of steam vessels on this service; but the Admiralty had received a request from the Scottish Fishery Board to remove the sailing cutters from their waters and to substitute steam vessels. No doubt, in the case of a calm, a steam vessel would be much more effective in pursuit than a sailing vessel; but, however that might be, he could assure the House that the Admiralty would do all that lay in their power to give protection to the fisheries. The hon. Member for South Warwickshire (Mr. Sampson Lloyd) had drawn attention to the case of the old navigating officers. Everyone acquainted with the Navy knew what a valuable class of men they were. The changes that had been made with a view to increasing the knowledge of navigation in the Service had, no doubt, like other changes, involved a certain amount of hardship to individuals. He would be happy, on the part of the Admiralty, to promise that they would give a due consideration to any representations which the deputation such as the hon. Member asked them to receive might make.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to*.

SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.

DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Sir Arthur Otway, in introducing the Navy Estimates my first duty is one which I am sure the Committee will allow me readily to perform. It is the duty of paying a tribute of well-merited praise to the officers, seamen, and Marines, who have been engaged in serving the country on the Nile and at Suakin. The progress of Lord Wolseley's Expedition has been most materially aided by the able surveys conducted by Captain Hammill, and by the zealous efforts of Captain Bedford and the officers and men under his command. At the engagement of Abu Klea two promising officers—Lieutenants Pigott and De Lisle—and a brave little band of seamen died defending their guns against overwhelming numbers. The rescue of Sir Charles Wilson by Lord Charles Beresford was a feat of arms equally remarkable for the skill and gallantry displayed. I particularly desire to place on record the services rendered by the naval engineer, Mr. Benbow, on that occasion. When under fire he succeeded most effectually in repairing a disabled boiler. At Suakin the prolonged defence by Commodore Molyneux and the Force under his command has been a most trying service. We rejoice to have given to the Marines the reward they most value. They are to occupy a post of honour, which must also be a post of danger, in the Army which is about to take the field under Sir Gerald Graham. Passing from these stirring events to the administrative business of the Navy, the Estimates it is my duty to move amount, with the appropriations, to a total for 1885-6 of £13,090,440. The corresponding amount for 1884-5, excluding the Supplementary Estimates for Egypt, was £11,645,711. Of this large increase we have £1,154,000 under the Shipbuilding Votes—a considerable advance on the £800,000 promised in December; £76,000 for pay, food, and clothing, and £173,200 under the Works Vote. Taking the Votes in detail, I propose to deal first with those which relate to the *personnel*. Commencing with the officers, we have to make provision for an increase of 100 on full pay. The addition is rendered necessary by the large number of ships in commission on the China Station and in the Red Sea; and it is also due, though to a slighter degree, to the appointment of an Admiral on the Australian Station. The growing importance of the duties attaching to the Australian command renders it extremely desirable that an Admiral should command the Squadron. Passing from the officers to the seamen, we have made an important alteration in the term of continuous engagements. The first period of service, under the new Regulations, has been

extended from 10 to 12 years. Our experience shows that the change is not unacceptable to the boys and to their parents, and it will be a great advantage to retain men longer in the Service. In the small vessels, when first put into commission, a large proportion of experienced seamen will not be unwelcome to the officers in command, if caught in heavy weather in the chops of the Channel or in the Bay of Biscay, on first leaving England. The present Estimate provides a considerable addition to the number of boys. The experience of recent years has shown that the number for which provision has been taken is insufficient. At the present time, the service boys are 650 in excess of the number voted. We expect that the present strength will be fully maintained in 1885-6, and provision has been made in the Estimates accordingly. The total number of service boys in the present Estimates is increased from 2,500 to 3,100; and we propose to take 300 more boys for training. Although steam has been so largely substituted for canvas in the Navy—a change which, I have no doubt, is rather painful to old sailors like my right hon. and gallant Friend opposite (Sir John Hay), and, indeed, to all ardent lovers of sailing—it will be found that the demand for seamen in the Navy has not diminished. We have more ships in commission, more men in the gunnery ships; and at the present time we have no less than 1,000 under instruction in the torpedo, electrical work, and submarine mining. These are some of the reasons which we have to urge for the great increase in the number of boys. In addition to these proposals, provided for under the normal Estimates, we shall ask Parliament to vote 500 officers and men and 500 Marines for service in Egypt. Their pay, as I have already explained in answer to a Question of my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), will be included in another Estimate for the Egyptian Expedition. In connection with the manning of the Navy, I may state that steps are about to be taken to give more general instruction in gunnery. In former days, when the complements of ships consisted mostly of seamen, all of whom were trained at the guns, the non-combatants were comparatively few. At the present time, in our modern mastless ships the non-combatants are about 30 per cent of the complement. This large proportion of undrilled men is a source of weakness, and we propose to remedy it by the Regulations about to be issued. Although, Sir Arthur Otway, the charge will fall upon the Vote for Medical Services, it may be convenient, at this stage of my statement, that I should refer to the recent improvements which have taken place in the sick berth staff of the Naval Hospitals. The Navy will be gratified to learn that Her Majesty takes a deep personal interest in this subject; and on behalf of the Admiralty I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without expressing our acknowledgments to Sir John Reid, the Medical Director General, for the pains he has taken in re-organizing the Service. The details of the new arrangements were described to the Committee last year by my Predecessor. The general supervision of the nursing is entrusted to the Sisters, who have had experience either in the Civil or Military Hospitals. In future, all the attendants on the sick will have received a systematic training. The changes, of course, have involved some additional expense; but the country will not grudge it. The modest salaries we give them are, indeed, a very imperfect acknowledgment of the gratitude we owe to these devoted Sisters, who by day and by night are giving their care to the sick and wounded seamen and Marines. And now I turn to a question which will greatly interest hon. Members representing the Dockyards. I need scarcely say that I refer to questions of pay and allowance. Hon. Members will see that without an increase in the number of men there is an increase of charge under these Estimates amounting to £33,000 for allowances to men trained as gunners and torpedo men, and for the larger proportion of petty officers and the increased number of artificers serving afloat. The establishment of the rating of chief stokers is the most recent boon conceded by the Admiralty. We have been glad to give a deserving class of men the advancement and promotion to the rating of a chief petty officer. There are several questions pending with reference to pay and allowances to engineers and paymasters. They have earnestly pressed for the abolition of what is

known as the 11 years' rule. Their appeal has been referred to a Departmental Committee. The Admiralty are sensible that the calculations of promotion have turned out less favourably than was expected, and have not been altogether verified by the result. We agree in the main with the views of the Committee, that one-half of their junior time should be allowed to count for increase of pay and pension until the completion of 11 years' senior service, and then all, as at present. The necessary communications are now taking place with the Treasury; and we hope, in the course of the ensuing year, to make an arrangement which will be satisfactory to the engineers and paymasters. In the numerous and pessimist discussions with reference to our naval position which have recently filled the usual organs of public information our resources for manning the Navy have been called in question. I wish, therefore, to take this opportunity of stating that while in time of peace we sometimes feel the pressure of the new requirements for the training of the Navy which absorb a considerable number of our men, and we are in consequence occasionally short of men available for draft, we have a large reserve to meet a real emergency. We have, in ships serving on foreign stations, a considerably larger proportion of supernumeraries than was formerly the case; and at the home ports, in gunnery ships, in flagships, and harbour ships of all classes, and in the Steam Reserve and elsewhere, we have a Force which may be roughly estimated at not less than 13,000 men. Behind them we have the Marines, 6,200; the Coastguard, 4,000; the Pensioner Reserve, regularly drilled, 1,950; the Naval Reserve, 19,000; and the Naval Artillery Volunteers, 1,600. The total *personnel* of the Navy, including Pensioners under 50 and the Naval Volunteers, constitutes a Force of 86,000 men.

MR. W. H. SMITH: In that total are the officers included?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: Yes; the total number of men of all classes, on the active list, is 57,000, and the complements of all ships which can be made ready and sent to sea in 12 months are 68,000. If we were engaged in a war of magnitude we should, no doubt, require to strengthen the Navy more particularly in the lieutenants and engineers and in the engine-room complements. But in the Mercantile Marine we have a practically inexhaustible reserve of skilled navigators, competent naval men, experienced engineers, artificers, and firemen. The Naval Reserve, more especially the Second Class Reserve, could be recruited to any strength required from the fisheries, the source from which the best sea-faring element in the French *Inscription Maritime* is derived. And now I turn to the Shipbuilding Votes. I have already given the total increase in these Votes. The Estimates supply the details, and I therefore proceed at once to explain the steps taken to accelerate the construction of ships in fulfilment of the undertaking which was given to Parliament in December. I will deal first with the work in the Dockyards. Under the present Board of Admiralty, large additions have, from time to time, been made to the number of men employed in the Dockyards; and it has been thought advisable by the Admiralty, and also, I believe, by the House of Commons, not to increase very largely the number of men employed in shipbuilding in the Dockyards; but it was the general sense of the House that we should rely upon the contract supplies for any large extension of building. In these circumstances, having to undertake additional shipbuilding work without increasing the number of men, we determined to concentrate our efforts on ships in an advanced state of progress, and a sum of £40,000 has been granted to be spent within the present financial year for the purpose of pushing forward iron-clads by profitable overtime, in accordance with the scheme which was recommended by the officers of the Yards. By these means, in spite of the unforeseen causes of delay with which we are only too familiar, we have been able to make considerable progress with all of these vessels. The *Colossus* is now practically complete, and the *Collingwood*, *Edinburgh*, *Warspite*, and *Impérieuse* will be completed in the ensuing financial year. It was intended to complete the *Impérieuse* at the same date as the *Colossus*; but there has been an unforeseen cause of delay owing to the foundering of a steamer carrying important parts of her machinery from the Thames to Portsmouth. The additions which will be made to the strength of the Navy in

the two ensuing years are as follows:—In 1885-6 we shall complete the four iron-clads I have already mentioned, and in addition three protected ships of the *Leander* class, the *Calliope*, two fast despatch vessels, and two gun-vessels. In 1886-7 it will be possible to complete the iron-clads *Howe*, *Rodney*, and *Hero*, and probably the *Benbow;* the two protected vessels, the *Mersey* and *Severn*, nine *Scouts*, the *Landrail*, and six gunboats; in all 22 vessels. I wish that it were possible to promise further acceleration of the work of shipbuilding. Delays in completion have given occasion for the severest criticism to which the Admiralty has been subjected. Every Board has regretted the delay, and every Board has been unable to bring ships to completion as rapidly as they desire. I am sure that my hon. Friends who have had experience at the Admiralty will concur with me when I say that we see the ships advancing most satisfactorily up to the launching stage. The delays occur later, and they are attributable mainly to the transition state of the armaments of the Navy. When the prospect of war is not imminent, no Administration of a first-class Power would be justified in refusing to entertain the proposals which are put forward by our able staff of gunnery officers. A great Service like ours demands perfection, and is sensitively jealous of the slightest superiority elsewhere, even in the smallest detail. In the future we cannot hope to be wholly free from the difficulties due to change and improvement; but we believe that we have now settled within certain limits all the problems of gunnery which have in recent years prevented the rapid completion of our ships. And now, Sir Arthur Otway, I turn from the subject of the completion of ships to the laying down programme. The delays in completion, to which I have referred, have necessarily affected the laying down. The Committee will observe that only a small amount of progress—in point of fact, a mere commencement—is contemplated in the two armoured ships which are to be laid down in the Dockyards. We have decided, as I have just stated, that for the present it is better to concentrate our efforts on ships near completion. At the same time, I would remind the Committee that, by placing the two iron-clads in the programme, we insure that the preliminary works will be taken in hand. The actual building can be vigorously pushed forward as soon as labour becomes available from the completion of the other ships. The laying down programme for the Dockyards includes, in addition to the iron-clads, a torpedo ram, to be commenced very shortly at Chatham, and one vessel of the *Scout* type to be laid down at Devonport. And now, Sir, having stated what has been and will be done in the Dockyards, I have to explain the steps which have been taken to put out to contract the ships approved in December. The sanction of the House to the new programme of construction was obtained on the 2nd of December. The designs for the *Scouts* were completed on the 31st of December. Those for the belted cruisers were ready on the 27th, and for two iron-clads on the 29th of February. Tenders were invited for the six *Scouts* on the 5th of January. They were received on the 24th of February, accepted on the 27th, and the keels of four of those vessels have already been laid down. In the case of the *Scout* class, the Constructors of the Admiralty were extremely anxious to give the firms tendering an opportunity of proposing simplifications with a view to reductions in the cost, or suggesting improvements which were likely to increase the efficiency of the ships. For this reason a longer time than usual was given for the submission of tenders for the *Scout* class. Another reason I may name to the Committee for the extension of time is this. We have largely added to the number of firms invited to tender for the Admiralty work. No less than 34 firms sent in tenders for the vessels of the *Scout* class. In the case of the belted cruisers and the iron-clads, the private trade has had less experience in ships of that class, and for that reason the Constructors of the Admiralty did not attach so much importance to any suggestion that might be made, and therefore less time was allowed to the contractors for sending in tenders for the larger vessels. But while less time was originally proposed by the Admiralty, in deference to the expressed wish of the contracting firms, the time for sending in tenders has been extended to the 17th of April. I am very sensible that the public has been impatient at the apparent delay in these preliminary steps,

and many hard things have been said of the Admiralty. But I can assure the Committee that we have not been half-hearted or reluctant to obey the will of the country that the Navy shall be strengthened. Those who condemn the Admiralty so readily make no allowance for the inevitable complications which must be found in designs for ships of war, as compared with vessels of the Mercantile Marine. In former instances, as it was clearly shown in the evidence before the Earl of Ravensworth's Committee, loss of time and money has been caused by calling for tenders prematurely. The Earl of Ravensworth's Committee recommended that designs should be more carefully worked out before tenders were called for; and we determined to follow the judicious recommendation of the Committee. I can assure the Committee that time has not been lost by the extra care bestowed on the plans for the new ships. On the contrary, I am assured it will, in the end, secure an earlier completion and prevent much wasteful expenditure on alterations. The Committee should remember that these designs and specifications control and guide an expenditure of no less than £3,500,000; and that, although the designs were sketched out before a statement could be made to Parliament, the magnitude of the work of settling details may be inferred from the sum which is to be expended. I am assured by the technical advisers of the Admiralty that they are engaged—incessantly and constantly engaged—in the revision of designs. No sooner is a design made perfect than some invention is brought out which necessitates a reconsideration of details, and it is that revision which accounts for the long time required to prepare the designs of which I have spoken. Having explained the cause of the delay in putting out to contract the additional work, I would point out to the Committee that the expenditure proposed on the new vessels is slightly in excess of the amount approved by the House in December last. The amount has been increased from £800,000 to £812,000. We have also made some modifications in the list of ships to be put out to contract. The new contract work includes two iron-clads instead of the one iron-clad proposed by my noble Friend in "another place." My right hon. Friend (Mr. W. H. Smith) has alluded in the course of his remarks to a discrepancy which I frankly confess exists. Our scheme includes five instead of three belted cruisers, six instead of 10 *Scouts*, and 10 torpedo boats. Five torpedo boats are to be ordered later under the arrangement which I have already explained to the House in answer to the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley). The two iron-clads which are to be built by contract will be of the single-turret type already described to Parliament in December. With regard to the rate of progress in the building under contract, it is quite unnecessary to remind the Committee that when our proposals for additional building were brought forward in December a strong objection was made that the scheme of construction was to extend over a period of five years. But on this point it is an obvious remark that it is not for us to determine beforehand the Estimates of future years; all we can determine is the extent of the addition to the Estimates in 1885-6, which are alone under our control. We propose to add to those Estimates the sum of £812,000 for the purpose of carrying forward the construction of these new ships. We believe that this provision will be sufficient to make good progress with all the ships for which orders are being given; but if experience should show that we have under-estimated the rate of progress, we shall not retard the operations of the builders in deference to financial considerations. Sir, I have endeavoured to explain in sufficient detail our programme of building in the Dockyards and by contract, and it therefore only remains for me to bring the figures together. Our whole scheme of ships to be laid down is as follows:—Four iron-clads of the first class, five belted cruisers, one torpedo ram, seven *Scouts*, five gun-vessels, and 15 torpedo boats, of which 10 are to be ordered at once. Having given a list of the ships laid down, let me compare the tonnage proposed now with that in former years.

Lord HENRY LENNOX: Does that include the iron-clads which we were told had scarcely been begun?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: It includes both. I said the ships laid down. Our programme of shipbuilding in the Dockyards gives for armoured tonnage

practically the same tonnage as for the present financial year. In the class of protected tonnage we have an increase of 600 tons; in the contract programme the total building is increased from 4,624 to 11,338 tons. The Dockyard and contract programmes combined give a total of 14,423 tons for armoured vessels, 6,087 tons for protected, and 7,542 tons for unarmoured vessels, or a total of 28,052 tons. If we make a comparison of this tonnage as proposed for 1885-6 with the tonnage of former years we arrive at this result. The armoured tonnage is increased from an average of 8,051 tons per annum in 1877-81 and 11,948 in 1881-5 to 14,423 tons. Our protected tonnage is 6,087 tons, or, together, 20,500 tons for 1885-6. In unarmoured vessels the average construction for the last six years has been somewhat less than the programme for 1885-6. Having given the total tonnage to be built, I would invite the special attention of the Committee to the large amount of building proposed in the new class of protected vessels. The protected class is represented in our Dockyard programme chiefly by vessels of the *Mersey* type. In the case of the *Mersey*, the protection is by means of an armoured deck with numerous water-tight compartments. The protected tonnage comprises, in addition to the 1,248 tons we propose to build of the *Mersey* class, 2,820 tons of belted cruisers. These ships were fully described to Parliament in December. They are of a much more powerful type than the *Merseys*. They are armoured with a 10-inch belt, and are therefore much more protected on the water-line than any foreigu ironclads of the second class. In point of speed they have a marked superiority over any armoured ships afloat or building. We announced in December a speed of 17 knots. By our latest estimate the speed will be increased to 17½ knots. So far as we know, the only vessels of superior speed now building for any Navy are three now building for Italy and two for the Government of Japan. I would point out that those vessels are without armour protection; and it is certain that, owing to their smaller displacement, they could not hold their own in the long run at sea against the belted cruisers. It has been said that we ought to give preference to the type represented by the *Esmeralda*, which has an advantage in point of speed over the belted cruisers. But this, I can assure the Committee, is not the view accepted by the Board of Admiralty. Our Naval Colleagues are of opinion that the armoured belt of our new cruisers gives them a decided superiority over any of the cruisers they are likely to meet. In addition to their armament of guns they will be fitted with effective means for the discharge of torpedoes. Now, I turn to a question upon which much opinion has been expressed in a sense adverse to the course we feel called upon by our duty to take, I refer to the limited number of torpedo boats in our programme. The rate of construction proposed in December has been criticized as insufficient. Well, Sir, I venture to express the opinion that the criticism to which I refer has been occasioned by an imperfect appreciation of the great additions which we are really making to the Fleet, and in a form more necessary than what is technically known as the torpedo boat. The Board of Admiralty do not regard torpedo boats capable of being used only for coast defence as the type most required for the British Navy. We are more anxious to push forward the construction of vessels of a powerful type, capable of keeping the seas for an extended period in all weathers. Our programme of construction in that class of vessels which we think most effective includes, in addition to the torpedo ram already mentioned, two despatch vessels—the *Surprise* and the *Alacrity*—specially designed for service as torpedo cruisers, the nine *Scouts*, and the two steel-gun and torpedo vessels under construction at Devonport. We have 14 vessels of a total displacement of 21,500 tons; and if we compare this programme with the programme of construction for the French Navy, we find that the torpedo flotilla in progress in France includes four vessels of the *Condor* type, 1,260 tons, and eight of the *Bombe* type, 321 tons. The total tonnage of these vessels being 7,602 tons, as against 21,500 which I mentioned as being under construction for the British Navy. Turning from torpedo vessels to torpedo boats, we have actually under construction four of the first class and two of the second class. The number of torpedo boats of the

first class now building in France is 10, in Italy six, and in Austria four Our expenditure on the torpedo flotilla during the ensuing financial year will not be less than £400,000, as against £231,000 taken in the French Estimates for similar vessels. Having explained our policy in regard to the larger vessels, I may point out, in connection with the subject, that for the defence of our ports a formidable flotilla could be extemporized out of our steam pinnaces and launches. We had an example of what could be accomplished in this respect in the interesting operations for the defence and attack on Portsmouth carried out some years ago under the direction of Captain Gordon and the officers of the *Vernon*. Those who were present, and who saw the steam pinnaces, specially fitted for the purpose, driven at full speed over the booms, would probably be of opinion that for such rough usage as would be experienced in war the pinnaces were better adapted than the swift but fragile torpedo boats. It will be, perhaps, satisfactory to the Committee to be informed that we have 180 steam launches and pinnaces fitted with Whitehead torpedoes, and 170 steam cutters fitted with spar torpedoes. If these boats be reckoned efficient for the defence of our harbours by torpedoes, I think it will be the opinion of the Committee that we are somewhat better provided in this respect than is generally supposed.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Are they not abroad?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: No inconsiderable number of them are abroad; but we have a very large number available at home. Now, I desire to make a few observations on our repairing programme. Hon. Members may have observed that the wages of men employed on repairing have been reduced in these Estimates by nearly £40,000. That is the very satisfactory result of the improved management of boilers, the greater durability of iron and composite construction, and of the arrangements which we have been able to make for the extended absence of vessels from home. We have been able to keep vessels longer abroad, because our ship yards abroad have become more and more capable of efficiently repairing our ships. I am able to say that in this way two iron-clads have been ordered for repair abroad, and we are confident that the work will be done in every respect satisfactorily. We send out vessels from England to those stations where the Dockyards are not well adapted for large repairs; but in future, when those vessels have performed a certain period of service, they can be transferred from the Cape to Bermuda, and those on the Pacific to Hong Kong. A great economy has resulted. Turning to the repairing programme, which includes the completion of the *Black Prince*, I may say that we have taken this ship in hand because the boilers are in good preservation Ships of the older type are well adapted, in the opinion of the Board of Admiralty, for the training of officers and men, which must be kept in view in connection with ships of the Channel Squadron. The alteration of the *Minotaur* and sister ship has been considered by the Board during the past year. It has been proposed to give them twin screws, compound engines, and to fit them as torpedo boat carriers at a cost of £250,000. The expense of any attempt to bring these vessels up to the ideas of the day is so formidable, that we have decided that no alterations in these ships should be made. Belted cruisers will do all the work which the *Minotaur* is capable of doing, and they will do it better. Passing from the iron-clads to the unarmoured vessels, the three large frigates have at length been taken in hand. We have completed the *Raleigh*. In the ensuing year we shall complete the *Inconstant*, and make good progress with the *Shah*. The Committee will be glad to know that the following iron-clads are now ready for sea. The list includes the *Devastation*, *Ajax*, *Thunderer*, *Hotspur*, *Rupert*, *Orion*, and *Iron Duke*. The *Conqueror* is practically complete; and with regard to the *Inflexible*, as no repairs of importance are required, she could be made ready for sea in about three months. The *Monarch* and *Swiftsure* will shortly arrive in England, and then they will be at once taken in hand. Of the unarmoured vessels we have an ample number of reliefs. Passing on to the Gun Estimates, I have already stated to Parliament, in answer to a Question by my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster Mr. W. H Smith with regard to the heavy guns, that the War Office has undertaken to complete them

sufficiently early to prevent any delay of the ships. Of the guns of lesser calibre provision is made for 101 6-inch and 43 5-inch guns, and we are expecting to receive 150 quick-firing guns at the end of the present financial year. We also provide 100 more in 1885-6; and of machine guns of various calibres we take money for 300 during the ensuing year. I would call the attention of the Committee to the fact that the minor armament is becoming more and more an important feature in our Ordnance Estimates. Of a total amount of £418,000 taken for guns in 1885-6, no less than £285,000 is for 6-inch guns and lighter ordnance. The amount taken for naval ammunition, &c. in the Army Estimates for 1885-6 is £297,860, being an increase of £115,476 over the amount for 1884-5. The total provision for ordnance for the Navy under Army and Navy Estimates combined will be somewhat in excess of £1,000,000. Descriptions of new types to be laid down usually form a prominent and interesting feature of the statements made in moving the Navy Estimates. In December last the statement which I was then called upon to make necessarily anticipated much which I might be called upon to say on the present occasion. I desire, however, to take this opportunity of correcting an erroneous impression which may have gained circulation from recent publications in the newspapers. The Admiralty have been charged with deliberately sacrificing the naval power of the country to mean and paltry considerations, and that assertion has been supported with a list of the 12 largest ships which have been lately launched in England and France. Sir, I should be sorry to present myself before the Committee as an advocate of a policy of shipbuilding in which competition in dimensions was to be the primary test of merit; but, in justice to the Admiralty, I wish to put forward the result of the comparison of all the ships which are now building, or which are now included in the programme of the two countries. The average tonnage of our 14 ships is 9,530, as against the average of 8,528 tons for the 15 iron-clads in the French programme. We have never insisted on any arbitrary limitation of size. I cannot pass from the subject of shipbuilding without saying that I am not unconscious that the *Admiral* class has been challenged by the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward J. Reed); but as his Motion must ultimately give rise to exhaustive discussion, I feel it my duty to postpone the observations which I might make on behalf of the Admiralty rather than engage at the present time in an imperfect and desultory discussion. In the meantime I am authorized to say that the Admiralty unanimously approve the design of our ships. The trials of the *Collingwood* are, perhaps, the most remarkable incidents of the past year in connection with shipbuilding. At the measured mile the speed realized in the *Collingwood* reached 16·8 knots, a very high figure; and at the load draught a speed of 16¼ knots is confidently expected. Difficulties have been experienced in perfecting the breech mechanism for the 43-ton guns; but on the occasion of a recent trial the gear was found to work in an entirely satisfactory manner. I am desired by the Constructors of the Admiralty to express their great obligations to Mr. Rendel for his advice, which has so materially tended to this satisfactory result. On the Vote for New Works—Vote 11—we have an increase, as compared with last year, amounting to £173,000. It has been our policy to concentrate our expenditure on the building of ships; but we have now to deal with demands which cannot be postponed. We have to provide torpedo boats, ships, and every other description of vessels of this kind, and we have to provide the means to test the efficacy of those vessels as well as of gun mountings. At Malta we shall make good progress with the new graving dock commenced last year; and we are also making provision for increased dock accommodation in other parts of the world. We take £15,000 for a grant to a private Company at Hong Kong who are completing a dock of sufficient dimensions to receive ships of the largest class; and we are also pressing upon the Indian Government the necessity of providing a dock at Bombay capable of admitting iron-clads of the *Admiral* class. At the Cape we have availed ourselves of a recent opportunity to purchase a repairing slip and some land adjacent to our present yard. In conclusion, we may ask ourselves this question—Are the Estimates we are now proposing to Parliament sufficient? It

is impossible for those who are responsible for the administration of the Navy to say that any Estimates fully provide for all the wants of our great Sea Service. There must be many things less perfect than we could wish. But if we test these Estimates by another standard, and compare the amounts at our disposal with the sums voted in other countries, the provision we are making should be ample. The present Estimates provide for an expenditure on building, as distinguished from repairs, amounting in round figures to £3,000,000 sterling, or double that proposed, according to our best information, for the Navy of any other Power. The cost of building being certainly not greater, on the whole, here than elsewhere, the additions to the Navy may be taken as proportionate to the expenditure. Such, then, are the facts with reference to the *matériel* and *personnel* of the Navy. I say that we are making adequate provision for the development of our Navy; and our Navy is, after all, only the point of the spear. Our resources for construction and manufacture give us a greater power than we could possibly derive from an unlimited reserve of ships and weapons, which the process of invention tends to render obsolete. Every war demands some special type of ship, and our resources for building external to the Dockyards are unrivalled. In the Crimean War, when our industrial resources were far less than at present, three floating batteries of 3,000 tons, and protected by 4-inch armour, were completed in the short space of three months. In less than five months more than 200 gun-boats and 100 mortar-boats were completed for sea. In less than three months from the date of signing the contract, the establishment of Mr. John Penn produced and fitted on board the gunboats 80 engines of 64-horse power. It was thus that we were enabled, as Viscount Palmerston reminded the House of Commons, to raise the strength of the Navy from 212 ships in commission in February, 1854, to 590 ships in commission in March, 1856. The Mercantile Marine, if it is a vulnerable point, is also a valuable resource. The merchant steamers could not meet on equal terms regularly-built vessels of war; but they could defend themselves against ships of their own class, and could accompany our squadrons as look-out ships, despatch vessels, and store ships. Of the 7,000,000 tons of British steam shipping afloat, more than 1,000,000 is classed on the Admiralty list, and more than half of this 1,000,000 tons is specially capable of performing service as cruisers owing to their high speeds. I would not lightly use language which would lull the country into a false security; but I venture to express the hope that when due regard is paid to our vast resources, to the condition of the Fleet on any fair comparison with other Powers, and to the large reinforcements of the Navy we are now proposing, these Estimates may be accepted as sufficient. We are making a great step in advance in response to a strong popular demand. It will be for the Parliament of the future to provide for these continuous efforts, by which alone a great Navy can be maintained.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That 59,000 men and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, including 12,900 Royal Marines."

MR. W. H. SMITH: I am somewhat at a disadvantage in rising at seven minutes past 12 to comment on a statement of an hour and a-half, but which was by no means too long considering the importance of the subject. My hon. Friend (Sir Thomas Brassey) certainly did not say more than was necessary, or more than was expected by the Committee. He alluded to the service of the seamen and officers of the Fleet during the past year. No words which can be used in Parliament can adequately express the gratitude due by the country to those men who have done such admirable work on the Nile, and in other dangerous enterprizes in which they have been engaged. The Secretary to the Admiralty referred to the good service Captain Hammill had done in surveying the Nile, and the good service Captain Bedford had done in superintending the transport arrangements. I venture to say that if it had not been for the work done by those officers and the blue-jackets, the Nile Expedition would have been practically impossible. It is to their work that Lord Wolseley owes his successful arrival at Korti, and the supply of provisions necessary for the enterprise.

Reference has also been made to the loss of men. There has been a heavy loss. The men have died most gallantly in the service of their country, and have shown that they can fight on shore as well as navigate ships on sea, and in most narrow and difficult waters. I am sure, therefore, that the thanks of the country will be given to them most heartily whenever Her Majesty's Government ask for a Vote of Thanks from Parliament. The hon. Gentleman referred to the increase in the Estimates. I will postpone any remarks I have to make as to the increase in the Shipbuilding Vote until I have run through the least important, but still important, question to which he referred. He spoke of an increase in the number of officers. I cannot help feeling, Sir, that there must be a considerable increase in the number of officers employed, especially in the number of torpedo and gunnery officers. That is a question which will require the very serious consideration of the Admiralty. There is no doubt that there is a far greater demand now than there was in the past for skill and scientific treatment in the management of the new and most powerful instruments of warfare. That demand will have to be supplied in some way by the Admiralty. Well, reference has also been made by my hon. Friend (Sir Thomas Brassey) to the importance of the Australian command, involving the employment of a Flag Officer. I entirely agree with him; but that is only another illustration of the growing demands which are made on the Navy in all parts of the world; demands for protection, demands for supervision, demands for adequate representation of the interests and duties of the country wherever Colonial enterprize is found. I entirely concur in the course which has been pursued with regard to the extension of the first term of service. I think that it is an advantage to the men themselves, and certainly it is a great advantage to the nation, because the experience which is gained by the men no doubt adds greatly to the discipline and steadiness of the crews of the ships, whether they were going down Channel, or crossing the Bay of Biscay, or sailing on the West Coast of Africa, or in any other part of the world. Remark was made by my hon. Friend as to the number of men borne. I was looking this morning at the Estimates with respect to this point; and I find that, notwithstanding the demands which are now made and recognized by the Admiralty, notwithstanding the fact that we are to have 1,000 men in Egypt—500 Marines and 500 blue-jackets—the Navy, all told, will be only 59,000, as against 58,800 in 1881. Well, Sir, I am by no means saying that 1881 was a standard to which we could go back; but if the number was not excessive in that year, it certainly suggests to the consideration of Parliament, and of the country, whether 200 men more are sufficient to counterbalance the drain which a serious war, such as that in the Soudan, involves, and which the circumstances and conditions which we have now to face—much more serious circumstances and conditions than those of 1881—are causing. I should like to know, as the question of manning has been mentioned, and as the question of an adequate reserve has been brought under the notice of the Committee, how many ships and what ships are ready, whether the complements are made up, and in how many days could those ships be fully manned? I have made inquiries myself, and I have been given to understand that it would not be possible to man the ships which are in the first reserve at Portsmouth under three weeks from the present time, because there is a deficiency of stokers and artificers, and you have not got a system ready for immediate application. It is this unreadiness in the present condition of the Navy which we have to complain of. Well, Sir, we are told that there is a very large reserve to meet emergencies. I believe there is a large reserve; but I should like to know whether the Admiralty have any system whatever by which that reserve could be made available in case of a sudden outbreak of war; whether they have any view in their own mind of what they would do in the event of war—how they would find ships to do the work which is required of them; how they would find ships to protect the trade and commerce of the country, and those especially which are engaged in bringing food into the country? We have not been informed by my hon. Friend on that point. My hon. Friend laid great stress upon the building programme for the coming year. I con-

fees I was a little surprised to find that he made no reference whatever to the building which has been accomplished during the past year It is a usual thing for the Secretary to the Admiralty, or the First Lord of the Admiralty, as the case may be, in making the Annual Statement with regard to the Estimates, to show what they have done in the past year; but to-night the hon. Gentleman made no reference to what has been done in the last 12 months. With regard to the building programme, however, the hon. Gentleman said that in fulfilment of the undertaking made in December the Admiralty had concentrated its efforts in advancing ships, and that £40,000 had been expended, or had been given to the Dockyards this year to be expended, on profitable overtime, so as to make considerable progress with the ships; and considerable progress had consequently been made. Well, Sir, I have taken pains to ascertain from the Estimates what progress was made during the past year, both in the Dockyards and in the contract work. I think it is well to do that, in order that we may judge by the work which has been done whether there is any hope whatever that the promises held out to us as to the future will be realized. I take the Dockyard Estimates for 1884-5, and if my hon. Friend will turn to page 204 he will be able to follow me. The hon. Gentleman will see that in order to realize the promise to build in 1884-5 10,500 tons, it was proposed to advance the *Anson* to 2,207 tons, the *Camperdown*, to 2,485; the *Collingwood*, to 4,978; the *Colossus*, to 6,150; the *Edinburgh*, to 4,509; the *Hero*, to 3,380; the *Impérieuse*, to 4,900; the *Rodney*, to 3,935; the *Warspite*, to 4,414; the *Hero*, to 1,033; the new vessel, to 387; a total of 38,378 tons. Now, if the hon. Gentleman turns to page 210 of the Estimates for this year, he will find that it is shown that the *Anson* has been advanced to 2,171 tons; the *Camperdown*, to 2,486; the *Collingwood*, to 4,857; the *Colossus*, to 6,150 being assumed to be complete, although, I believe, she is not complete); the *Edinburgh*, to 4,685; the *Hero*, to 3,581; the *Impérieuse*, to 3,925; the *Rodney*, to 3,909; the *Warspite*, to 3,842; the *Hero*, 1,032; the new vessel, nothing—that is to say, that between the two sets of figures there is a total difference of 1,740 tons. Instead of 10,500 tons being built, as promised, only 8,760 tons were built But on page 197 of these Estimates it is claimed that instead of 10,500 tons having been built, 10,745 tons have been built In point of fact, these figures are absolutely fallacious. Of course, the promise to build certain tonnage has never been fulfilled by any Government, certainly not by the present one; there has always been a very considerable deficiency. Now, Sir, I will read an extraordinary note which appears on page 197 of the Estimates—

"It must be understood that the tonnage corresponding to the expenditure of a certain sum of money for labour will not necessarily have any reference to the weight of materials worked into the hull when that sum is expended."

In other words, it is here argued that a ton is not a ton. But there is another note here which is equally curious—

"This amount includes the pay of leading men of shipwrights up to 1st July. These officers were at that date made Inspectors, and have since been paid out of the Salary Vote By this alteration there is an apparent loss of about 323 tons for 1884-5; and 436 tons for 1885-6."

That note means this — that if you double the pay of a man, you get double the work out of him. But that is not so. If you increase a man's pay so that he shall wear a top hat instead of a cap, and you can call him an Inspector, you have no right to assume that you get more tons out of him. If you spend money in building a ship, to a certain extent, and in taking it to pieces again, the tons built, and those taken to pieces, are called additions to the Fleet. That is an extraordinary statement. I have protested against its being made in the past, and I protest against its being made now, because it invalidates the statement which the Secretary to the Admiralty makes. The hon. Gentleman has told us that a certain work will be done. That work will not be done; the ships will not be built in the proportion and to the extent which he desires, and to the extent which he endeavours to lead the Committee to suppose. I make no charge against my hon. Friend; but there is this very curious fact to be noticed—that notwithstanding the inaccuracy and fallaciousness of this Estimate as to the number of tons built, the cost of building has increased enor-

mously during the last three years. In the Estimate of 1883-4 it was estimated that 11,490 tons were built, and that they cost at the rate of £33 6*s*. 9*d*. per ton—that is to say, the assumption of the Department was that every £33 6*s*. 9*d*. paid in wages and so forth meant a ton of a ship. In 1884-5 the Estimate was increased, and £34 8*s*. 9*d*. spent in wages was assumed to be equivalent to a ton, and now we find that the equivalent in wages of a ton is £35 5*s*. 9*d*. I do not know why a ship should cost more in wages than it did three years ago. I do not see why the increase should be so rapid as it appears to be, though I should not quarrel with the fact if we got the ships in return. There seems to be a kind of paralysis, or an extraordinary condition of things, which prevents us getting the ships when we spend the money. If we take the case of protected ships—shown on page 204 of the Estimates for last year—it will be found that the *Mersey* was to be advanced to 1,339 tons; the *Severn*, to 955; the *Thames*, to 662; the new *Mersey*, 314; another new *Mersey*, 61; *Calypso*, to 1,470; *Calliope*, to 1,397; the *Pylades*, to 772; the *Amphion*, to 1,443; the *Arethusa*, 93; the *Leander*, 164; the *Phæton*, 92; the *Mariner*, to 520; the *Racer*, to 520; the *Icarus*, to 209; the *Melita*, 87; the *Swallow*, 50; and the *Acorn*, 80. I went through the corresponding figures also, as they are shown on page 210 of this year's Estimates, and I will give them to my hon. Friend if it is necessary. I find they show a deficiency of 1,297 tons, 10,513 tons were promised, and only 9,216 were built. In other words, of protected ships, only four-fifths of the tons promised were built. The Contract Vote shows the same thing. The *Benbow* was advanced to 3,451, slightly more than was promised; but the other contract ships show a deficiency of 511 tons. Taking the whole together, the programme shows that we had 20,679 tons promised, and that only 17,111 were built, a gross deficiency of 3,568 tons. I will illustrate how this is done by the case of the *Arethusa*, *Leander*, and *Phæton*. It was shown in the Estimates of 1883-4, page 204, that each of these vessels required 251 tons to be built in them to complete making 753 tons in all. Of these tons the Estimates of 1883-4 provided for—*Arethusa*, 251; *Leander*, 55; *Phæton*, 92; a total of 398. The Estimates of 1884-5 provide for—*Arethusa*, 93; *Leander*, 164; *Phæton*, 92; total, 349. Now, the Estimates of 1885-6 provide for the *Arethusa*, 214; and for the *Phæton*, 275; a total of 489. In the three years, therefore, it is provided that 1,236 tons shall be built into ships, in which only 753 tons were required. The ships have not grown bigger, and only one of them, the *Leander*, is now in course of completion. These facts require grave consideration, for they strike a blow at the confidence which the Committee ought to place in the Estimates of a great public Department like that of the Admiralty. I wish to lay down no rigid rule. I know that one ship may have to be advanced at the cost of another, and there may be frequent displacements; but when a great effort has been made, and £48,000 more wages have been granted in order to enable the Department to complete their work, and great results are said to have been obtained, and when, nevertheless, we find that that shows a deficiency of about one-sixth on the whole building programme of the year, I say enough is shown to give cause for very serious alarm to Parliament. There is one other point in connection with the speech of the hon. Gentleman to which I wish to refer; he spoke of the desire of the Admiralty to fulfil the undertaking they entered into with Parliament last December. Well, I will remind him of what that undertaking was. It was to contract for two iron-clads, five belted cruisers, two torpedo rams, 10 *Scouts*, 30 torpedo boats of the first-class, 10 more to be built every year, and two iron-clads in the Dockyards. He said—

> "We shall proceed at the utmost speed, consistent with due economy, in the Dockyards; and with regard to contractors, no obstruction will be imposed upon their exertions.—(3 *Hansard*, [294] 458.)

Then the hon. Member went on to say he proposed to raise the construction of armour-clads in the Dockyards to 12,000 tons—that is to say, 12,000 of the tons of which I have been speaking in regard to wages, and to build of unarmoured ships in the Dockyards 5,500 tons, making in all 17,500 tons. He proposed to raise the construction of armour-clad ships by contract 3,050 tons, and of unarmoured 8,940 tons, making 11,990, and adding 350 tons of torpedo boats—the construction of which he said is a very

costly mode of expending money—a total of 12,310 or 12,340 tons. Thus we have a grand total of construction of 29,810 tons for 1885-6 as compared with 20,679 tons for the present financial year, being an increase of 9,131 tons. Already the undertaking of December last has been reduced by 1,760 tons. The hon. Member asks Parliament to believe that they have fulfilled their undertaking. Well, I would much rather that they had come down and said—"We repent of our engagement and our undertaking, and we think we offered to do too much. We believe that a cold fit has come on Parliament and the country, and that we can well retire from the undertaking we made." But instead of that the hon. Gentleman came forward and said—"We have fulfilled the undertaking by proposing in Parliament to do some 7½ per cent less than we stated in the House of Lords on the 2nd of December we would do." Without wishing to say a single word that would be personally offensive to the hon. Gentleman, I must say that I do not think that is keeping faith with Parliament or the country in the way we had the right to expect that the First Lord of the Admiralty would keep faith with us. I am afraid I am occupying a great deal of the time of the Committee, but it is not my fault; these subjects at this moment are of very grave and deep importance. I would ask to be permitted to say a word upon another point which has struck me as very extraordinary in regard to these Estimates. There seems to me to be an enjoyment in the use of figures amongst some persons. An alteration, a change in figures, seems to produce a certain amount of satisfaction. Instead of noting down 7,500, it is very easy to write down 9,500. It is a small matter; but it is an indication of the use and of the value of figures in the Admiralty. On page 211, in regard to the propelling machinery in the Estimates of 1884-5, we find the *Benbow*, *Howe*, *Rodney*, and *Camperdown*, all shown as of 7,500 indicated horse power, and the *Hero* as of 4,500 horse power. Well, in the Estimates of 1885-6 we find that the machinery has, all of a sudden, gone up in the case of the *Benbow*, *Howe*, *Rodney*, and *Camperdown* to 9,500 horse power, and in the case of the *Hero* from 4,500 to 6,000 horse power; in that way they show 2,000 horse power above the Estimate of 1884-5, as regards the larger ships, by a stroke of the pen. How could that change have occurred? It might be that the Admiralty had found some mode of suddenly increasing and developing the power of machinery which is three-fourths constructed, but I am at a loss to know what that mode can be; the circumstance is an unusual one, and it seems to me to require some explanation. Of the four first ships only 9,265 horse power were to have been constructed after the 31st of March, 1886; but there, again, on page 215 of the Estimates of 1885-6, we find that there is a considerable excess in the work to be done. Although it was assumed they were so near completion, the Estimate shows 9,873 horse power to have been constructed, and 985 remaining to be constructed after the 31st of March, 1886. Well, Sir, I now wish to say a word or two with regard to the torpedo boat business. My hon. Friend has spoken with considerable detail on the subject of torpedo boats. He first rests his case on the fact that we have 170 steam pinnaces, varying from nine to 12 knots speed, which are attached, most of them, to ships in commission, in ordinary, or in the first reserve, very few of which, I think, are in excess of the requirements of those ships which will have to go to sea. But he says those are to be a great resource for the defence of our mercantile harbours and of our coasts. Well, it seems to me that this is a new view of the case; but I do not wish to derogate in the slightest degree from the importance of the statement he has made. Let us realise what our position is. No first-class torpedo boats have been added since 1880. Five years have elapsed, and no first-class boats have been laid down. We have none at the present moment which can compete with the French, with the Austrian, or the German new boats. Mr. White's new boats, that were mentioned the other day, are very useful; but although seven have been delivered, only two are fitted. We were told that four first-class boats are building, and two second-class are in course of construction; but it is a curious thing that, although a torpedo boat can be built with economy and advantage, if your design is complete in six months, these boats were building last year, and, according to the Estimates, are not to be completed this year, and it is this delay

and procrastination against which I so strongly protest, both in the interests of the Service and the country, and also in the interests of economy. The additions by the present Board, since 1880, are two wooden boats ready, five wooden boats built, but not fitted, and four first-class and two second-class boats now building. Ten first-class boats are now to be commenced, and tenders have been invited. Since 1880 first-class boats have increased from 84 to 113 feet and 120 feet in length, with corresponding increase of speed. English builders have supplied France, Germany, Russia, Austria, Italy, Greece, the Brazils, and the Argentine Republic with such boats, in many cases as patterns. I say they have served as models, for in Austria, Russia, and France, a considerable number of similar boats have been built like them, and I am informed that they answer quite as well as those the English builders furnished. The hon. Gentleman gave us some information with regard to France. I desire, as much as I can, to avoid reference to Foreign Powers, as I think such reference is not desirable. We have to consider what we have for ourselves, for our own protection, and for the defence of our country, and not so much to take into consideration what other countries are doing. As a matter of fact, France has 56 first-class torpedo boats, Germany 18, and has voted money for 75 more, and Russia 115; whilst England, at the present moment, has only 19 of the older and smaller first-class boats. We at present have none of the improved boats afloat. Austria is building boats 135 feet by 13 feet 9 inches, which are to have a speed of 24 knots light, and 22 knots loaded. If the Government had only ordered these boats, which they admit to be necessary, when they made up their minds that an addition to the Navy was required in October last, they might have been delivered in May or June; and who can say how soon these boats may not be required? Who would dare take upon himself the responsibility of saying that these boats may not soon be exceedingly necessary? Who will say that the time may not come when they would be extremely useful in the defence of the country? I want to know when these boats, which are now to be ordered, but which have not yet been ordered, are to be furnished? I believe that the Government would have experienced no difficulty whatever, looking at the state of trade, in acquiring all the 30 which they admit to be necessary in a year's time, or, at the outside, in 18 months. The hon. Gentleman says the Government cannot pledge the Estimates of next year. That is perfectly true. They cannot pledge the Estimates of next year, but they are pledging the Estimates of next year if they leave work unfinished which they have partially undertaken to do this year, and they are pledging the Estimates of next year in a manner which would be most embarrassing and compromising to those who follow the hon. Gentleman and his Government. But, Sir, there is another question that arises out of the torpedo boat question. Where are the torpedos which are to be used in the torpedo boats? I understand that proposals were submitted to the Admiralty with reference to the supply of torpedoes, proposals which were invited by the Admiralty and submitted to them some months ago, but that yet no tender has been accepted. Now, it is notorious that our supply of torpedoes at the present time would not last three months of actual war. Every torpedo in store would most probably be used up in three months in actual warfare; and, as I understand it, we have not at the present moment means at Woolwich of producing more than 80 torpedoes a-year. That number, in the event of our having a serious conflict with any powerful enemy, would probably be used up in the course of a single week. I think the Committee and the country have a right to know whether steps have been taken to provide torpedoes for the torpedo boats. With regard to the *Colossus* and the *Conqueror*, it was stated that those vessels are practically complete. Well, last year, at this time, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant said that the *Conqueror* was complete. I happened, however, to have been at Chatham, and to have seen the tubes of her guns without a breech-piece. Well, a gun cannot be said to be complete without a lock or the means of using it, and that was the position of the guns of the *Conqueror* at that time. I believe that since then the breech-piece has been settled upon, but the loading apparatus has not been supplied. Though these guns may be

complete as far as the Dockyard is concerned, there is no chance that they will be complete for service for two or three months after the breech-loading apparatus has been supplied, and that has not yet been delivered at Chatham or at Portsmouth. It will not be delivered at Portsmouth until after the breech-loading apparatus has been tried and found satisfactory. We are, therefore, in this position—that if war were to break out, neither the *Colossus* nor the *Conqueror* could be made available for service, though they have had enormous sums of money spent upon them, and have been within a measurable distance of completion for very many months. And that leads me to ask another question. We were told that the *Anson*, the *Hero*, and the *Camperdown* were all to be completed within four years of the date at which they were laid down; but if I turn to the Estimates I find that the hydraulic mountings for the guns, which take two and a-half years to make, have not yet been ordered. How is it possible for ships to be complete in 1886 when the hydraulic mountings, which will take two and a-half years to make, have not yet been ordered? We are now in the year 1885, and supposing that these hydraulic mountings were ordered before the end of this month it would take at least until October, 1887, before the ship could be ready. It is these unfortunate delays, and the inability of the Department to make up its mind, and to the fact that there were so many minds to be brought together into one way of thinking, that these vessels remained so long incomplete. That is what makes me so exceedingly concerned, and so exceedingly anxious with regard to the future of the Navy of this country. The hon. Gentleman said a word or two about repairs, and we have heard something already about guns I will not go into the gun question to-night, because that is a matter on which probably the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) and the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Brand will have something to say on Thursday, and the hour is so late that I will not detain the Committee on the question; but the hon. Gentleman's remarks with regard to the *Minotaur* and the *Agincourt* remind me of the views of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant expressed with regard to these ships only a short time ago. He said that the *Minotaur*, and the *Agincourt*, and the *Achilles* would soon be out of order, and as these were important vessels it would be worth while to put them in order. We are told, however, now that this work is not to be done on account of the cost. It is said that the repairs will cost £200,000, and that, therefore, it is not worth while effecting them; and that, to my mind, is another instance of the inability of the Admiralty at any one time to grasp a question and settle it. If the *Minotaur* was to be repaired in 1881, how is it that the Admiralty have now come to the conclusion that it should not be repaired. I urge this because of the great importance of taking a complete view of the adequate strength of the Navy. Until it is decided to put the ships on one side, they are regarded as being valuable to the Service of the country, and their existence is pointed to as an argument against the building of other ships. It is said, when the necessity of increased construction is impressed upon the Admiralty—"Have you not got these magnificent vessels of 10,000 tons burden? What more do you want?" These vessels, when it answers the purpose of the Government to use the argument, are pointed at to account for so much displacement and so much strength. In reality these vessels should be struck off *The Navy List* and put on one side, left out of the calculation and not regarded in any way as ships valuable for the Service. A ship which is known to be one that can be no longer relied upon should be at once treated in that way. I will not go through the list of ships to be repaired; but it strikes me—and I say it with a strong desire to assist the Admiralty in dealing with this question—that they have not made a sufficient provision for repairs and for contingencies, and that that is really the reason why they fail to carry out their programme. The truth is that ships come in which must be repaired—ships that are not expected, and for which provision has not been made, and yet the repairs are urgent, and must be effected. The repairs, as I say, being urgent, the ships are forthwith taken in hand, and then down goes the programme. You spend the money, but you spend it on purposes wholly distinct from those originally contemplated. I believe that the figure

put down for repairs this year, compared with that of last year, will be found insufficient for the purpose. Now, there are one or two other questions that I am afraid, even at this hour, I must ask the Committee to consider. There was a Committee appointed to inquire into the condition under which ships are repaired —namely, the Committee on the Building and Repairs of Ships, and that Committee sent in some valuable and important recommendations. It said—

"That vessels, when designed and laid down in the Dockyards, or contracted for, should be completed to receive the best armaments and mechanical inventions known to exist, and thus great expense would be avoided and time saved. It appears in evidence that in the case of ships built in the Dockyards at least three years out of six might be saved by this course; and the Committee considers that the gain to the naval strength of the country by the more rapid completion of vessels possessing fittings of the most approved type at the time they were designed would more than counter-balance any advantage that might be gained by adopting the latest improvements at the cost of serious delay during the construction of the ship."

Other recommendations of the Committee were—

"1st. That the Admiralty should obtain the armaments they require, either through the Ordnance Department of the War Office, or by direct contract with private firms, as may from time to time appear desirable. 2nd. That encouragement be given to the general engineering talent of the country to design, manufacture, and supply the carriage and hydraulic arrangements for working and loading the guns."

That was confirmed in a Circular sent round by Mr. Barnaby, Director of Naval Construction, to the Royal Corps of Naval Constructors in January of this year. He stated generally that the causes of slow progress are—

"1. The money voted by Parliament provides for a given number of tons of armour-clads each year. If this will just build the equivalent of two ships in a year, and it is desired to build each ship in three years, it will follow that not more than six ships should be in progress together; but, as a matter of fact, twice that number are often found in progress together, by order of Parliament. 2. With so many ships in progress, delays in settlement of questions of armament and alterations are submitted to, and men are withdrawn and sent to other ships, thus spreading the money and the tons built over 12 instead of six ships, greatly increasing the cost per ship, and halving the rate of building."

To translate that, I think it means that if only the Chief Constructor of the Navy was allowed to build ships in three years he would be able to do so; but hitherto he has been compelled to take double the time in order that he might make a show—in order to make it appear that the Admiralty has double the number of ships on the stocks at the time. I want to know whether the Admiralty are prepared to follow the advice given in the Report of the Committee I have referred to, and to act upon the opinion expressed by their own Constructor, because it is absurd to say that Parliament has ordered these ships to be built in this way? It is the Admiralty that proposes them to Parliament, and the Admiralty who are responsible for the policy of shipbuilding and the administration. Are the Admiralty, I ask, prepared to adopt the policy laid down by that Report, and by their own officer, or do they intend to persevere in the course of laying down more ships than they can complete in a specified time, as they ought to complete them, with due regard to economy? I want to know if these recommendations are going to be attended to? Now, what is the cause of this delay and failure? The Committee sat and inquired very carefully—we had evidence brought before us to show that it would be possible to build fast cruisers in 18 months, if the Admiralty put them out to contract. By a letter from Elswick I learn that two or three fast cruisers, 18-knot type, could be turned out in 18 months from the date of the order—turned out complete, with armament and everything on board ready for her crews. The armour-clads would take somewhat longer, from two years to two years and three months. Messrs. John Elder and Co. are prepared to build and deliver two fast protected cruisers to carry heavy guns and steam 18 knots within 15 months after signature of unalterable contract—or an armour-clad of the *Conqueror* class within 24 months, or of the *Admiral* class within 30 months, rigged and ready for sea with fittings for armament, the Admiralty providing the guns. Now, I believe that Parliament desires above all things promptitude, vigour, and a rapid completion of all the work that has been undertaken; it does not desire to have a great show of ships which are totally useless when they are on the stocks, or while they are incomplete, and which are an extravagant expenditure every minute they lay in course of construction over and above the time that it ought to have taken to

finish them. What we want is to have the naval strength which is required for the country ready, and we want to know who is responsible for the delay—that delay which nothing seems capable of overcoming, and which prevents that completeness which Parliament requires? Are there divided counsels? Are there intentional delays anywhere? Is it impossible to get questions settled? Is there an absence of an individual who would absolutely order the work to be done? Is it the guns that cause the delay? The Earl of Northbrook says it is not; but the *Bellerophon*, according to the Estimates, is still, after five years, waiting for the guns she ought to have had years ago. I believe the guns have been changed frequently, and that the old intention as to the armament of the ship has been altered. Then the carriages are referred to as a cause of delay. I am told by some persons that they cannot be had; but the carriages are now entirely in the hands of the Admiralty, and they have the whole of the mechanical power of England to go to in order to get the carriages. Even if there are patents in the way of the Government, by the power they possess they could still have the work done. I came across an old friend the other day—a distinguished naval officer, and he said to me—"I cannot tell how it is, but the whole system is a make-believe of readiness when we are not ready; and that if war were to break out we should not be able to turn out a Fleet without delay, which would prove injurious, probably most disastrous to us." I regret that the House did not go into Committee to-day at an earlier hour, so that there might have been a full and proper discussion upon the condition of the Navy, when the whole subject might have been thoroughly sifted and thrashed out. I think that an inquiry ought to be instituted; but I do not think that it ought to be conducted by a Committee of this House. The Committee of 1848 was appointed in the month of February, and it reported in August upon the Navy Estimates; but it did not present a final Report until the year 1851. Now, I do not think we can afford to wait for three or four years for the Report of a Committee sitting twice a week for four hours at a time, and withdrawing probably from the Department officers who are most urgently required at the present moment for the discharge of important duties pressing on them every day and every hour. Of course, they would find it necessary to defend the policy which is carried out at the present time, and to exculpate themselves; and that exculpation would, of itself, withdraw their minds from the proper discharge of their duties. As I have said, I think an inquiry is necessary; but I do not think that it should be an inquiry by a Committee of the House of Commons. Such an inquiry would probably end in the complete mystification of the country, and the public would most likely fail to arrive at the causes of the evils which exist. I think the Government itself should appoint specially qualified men to inquire into special Departments of the Service which are capable of improvement. I should like to see four or five men deputed to consider the whole question of shipbuilding, to consider whether the system which now prevails is at all a safe or proper one, or whether it is creditable to the capable undertaking of any business operations or enterprize. What is it that we do? We order a ship to be laid down, but we are careful not to order all that is necessary for that ship on account of the circumstances and conditions which surround the Estimates from year to year. The result is that everything is taken in driblets. The engines are ordered by driblets. All the materials which go to make the ship are ordered by driblets. Any private person wanting a vessel would order everything that was required at the outset to be ready to put into the ship, so that no delay should be caused for want of material to the shipwrights and fitters, and there would be an immense economy both of money and of time. Let me refer to the cost of alterations. I happen to know that £10 or £12 a ton are lost in armour alone, which would not be the case if the whole design had been completed in the first instance. Then there is something else—we want to know something about the manning of the vessels of which my hon. Friend has spoken. We want to know whether the provision made for manning the ships can be improved, so as to put the manning of all vessels in a complete state of efficiency within a week of a vessel being put in commis-

sion? I do not think it could be done now; but unless we know from the directions given by qualified persons what the system is and what can be done—unless the instructions given are laid upon the Table by the Admiralty, and action is taken upon them in the course of a week or two after they are received, I am afraid we shall make no real progress. I cannot but say that a great deal of the failure to complete the programme from year to year, and a great deal of the inaccuracy which prevails in the figures, is due to the want of cordiality in the working which exists within the Admiralty itself. It arises from a vast number of zealous officers in their several Departments, working most conscientiously no doubt to the best of their ability in the discharge of their several duties, being brought together to decide matters which from their very conscientiousness they are prevented from deciding, and which prevents them from arriving at positive conclusions, simply because their decision has to be given upon work altogether outside their several provinces. The result is that matters of real importance to the country are seriously delayed or sacrificed. What we want is a man of vigorous grasp, with a will to control, direct, and order; with a sense of personal and individual duty and responsibility, who would be responsible for having everything done for the country without loss of time. It should be the work of one man, and I think it is the duty of one man to undertake the task. I am asking this not in panic or alarm, but with a deep sense of responsibility. The Navy exists for the country—it is not a mere expensive toy; not a mere matter of display; but if there were not a possibility of war, if there were no probability of war, if there were not almost the certainty that some time or other the Navy would be required to protect the country there would be no excuse for a Navy at all, and no justification for spending £10,000,000 or £12,000,000 a-year in order to keep up the Navy. But I do insist that if the Navy is to be maintained, as many ships as are necessary should be maintained in a state of efficiency. I am convinced, in my own opinion, that the Navy is not ready to perform the duties it might be called upon to discharge in case of war, and more particularly of sudden emergency. I am convinced that war, and a sudden war, is quite possible. We have been told by the Secretary of State for War, although it is not necessary for us to be told that by a Minister of State, as we can see it for ourselves, that there is cause for very grave anxiety, and that a sudden emergency might arise. Then if there is cause for anxiety there is an additional reason why the House and the country should see that our defences are adequate for the task they may be called upon to perform. It is essential that we should be secure in our homes, in our trade, and in our commerce, and that there should be no interruption to the native industries of the country, or to our food supply. It is the duty of the Admiralty to see that their arrangements and provisions are adequate to the necessities of the case. I speak strongly and plainly, because I feel deeply the responsibilities of the Admiralty. I feel deeply our own responsibility. I know that the provisions which exist are not adequate, and therefore it is that I express my earnest hope that the Government will take such steps as are necessary to bring order out of chaos, and to re-assure the country that the Navy, as far as the *matériel* and the *personnel* are concerned, if the actual service of the country required it, are perfect, and that they deserve the complete confidence and trust of the people of this country.

Lord HENRY LENNOX said, that those who were acquainted with his career in the House of Commons would believe him when he said that he had no intention of making a speech at that hour of the night (1.15). Still less did he intend to enter into the elaborate criticism which had been undertaken by his right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith); but he hoped when his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer rose that he would at least give some hope of affording him (Lord Henry Lennox) an opportunity, on a future day, of stating the objections he entertained to these marvellous Estimates which he would refrain from stating that night. If he did not feel that he was more or less responsible for the excitement which had been created in the public mind in regard to the state of the Navy he might have remained silent; but as he felt that his speeches and humble

efforts had had something to do with the arousing of public attention to the subject, he felt that he would be wanting in his duty if he did not rise at once and tell his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty that he had listened to his speech with alarm. He maintained that there had been nothing more nor less than a deliberate breach of faith in regard to the engagements deliberately entered into with Parliament last December. The Secretary to the Admiralty, with his usual ability, had tried to conceal it, by contrasting the expenditure of money the Admiralty were going to undertake this year with that of France. Hon. Gentlemen must know as well as he (Lord Henry Lennox) did that labour in France was much cheaper than in England; and the contrast, which his hon. Friend had considered it desirable to make, was altogether a fallacious one. He had only one thing more to say, and it was this. He desired forcibly to point out to the Committee that, after all that had been stated in December last, all that was promised now was four new iron-clads—two by contract, and two in the Dockyards—and they had the high authority of the Secretary to the Admiralty himself for saying that the two to be built in the Dockyards had scarcely been commenced, and that they were really nothing but paper ships. All that he desired at the present moment was to draw the attention of his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty to that point, and also to ask whether he was right or wrong in pointing out that, according to Vote 6, No. 10, the number of men employed this year, as compared with the number employed last year, notwithstanding the provisions which had been made, was really 47 less? He might have made a mistake; but he would appeal to the Secretary to the Admiralty to put him right. Keeping to his promise, he would not say one word more, except to appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to hold out some hope that this discussion would be resumed at an early day.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that he had been about to make an appeal to the Committee in the sense of what had fallen from the noble Lord. It appeared to him that it was desirable upon this, as upon previous occasions, that they should take the Vote for Men and the first Vote for Money at once, on the clear understanding that the discussion should be continued on an early day on the next Vote, and also, so far as shipbuilding was concerned, on Votes 6 and 10, which came later. If that understanding were arrived at, and it was the understanding that was followed not only last year, but in previous years, his noble Friend would have a full opportunity of making his comments, and they would be able to get over the difficulty of deferring the Vote for Men and the first Money Vote until a future day. He, therefore, asked the Committee to agree at once to the Vote on that distinct understanding.

MR. A. F. EGERTON said, he had only one question to ask—namely, when the right hon. Gentleman proposed to renew the discussion? It was very important that it should be renewed as soon as possible; and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the Committee some idea of the day upon which the Navy Estimates would be resumed.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the course which was pursued last year would be followed this; and the Navy Estimates would be taken, after Easter, on the earliest day consistent with other urgent Business.

MR. W. H. SMITH remarked, that if the course adopted last year were practically and substantially followed this year, he thought the Committee would do well to agree, at once, to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

(2.) £2,728,100, Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines.

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £8,409, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Repayment to the Civil Contingencies Fund of certain Miscellaneous Advances."

MR. LABOUCHERE said, there was an item contained in this Vote upon which he should ask the Committee to divide—namely, the item of £548 9*s.* 4*d.* for Fees paid on the Installation of His Royal Highness Prince George Frederick

Ernest Albert of Wales as Knight of the Garter. There was another item of a similar objectionable kind—namely, an item of £360 for special packets for the conveyance of distinguished persons. He thought it was ridiculous for the country to be called upon to pay a large sum of money to some private individual whenever Her Majesty bestowed the Order of the Garter upon him. He would not object to Her Majesty conferring the Garter upon any Member of the Royal Family, or upon the whole country if she chose; but what he did object to was that when Her Majesty took occasion to confer the Garter upon a Member of the Royal Family the country should be charged the sum of £548 9*s.* 4*d.* He supposed that these fees went to the Garter King-at-Arms, or some other officer who ought to be wiped off the face of the earth. As he had said before, it was perfectly ridiculous that the country should be called upon to pay these sums of money. If they were necessary at all they ought to be paid by the person upon whom the Order of the Garter was conferred. He would, therefore, propose to reduce the Vote by the sum of £548 9*s.* 4*d.*, and also by the next item of £360.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that the hon. Member would not be in Order in moving the reduction of the Vote by two separate items at the same time.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked if he would be precluded from afterwards moving the reduction of the item of £360 in the event of the Motion for reducing the Vote by £548 9*s.* 4*d.* being negatived?

THE CHAIRMAN asked what was the amount by which the hon. Gentleman proposed to reduce the Vote?

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he proposed to reduce it by two separate sums which amounted to £908 9*s.* 4*d.*, but he had received an intimation that it would not be competent for him to propose the reduction of the two items together; and as the first item was the larger sum, he wanted to know whether, if his Motion were negatived in regard to that sum, he would then be precluded from asking the Committee to agree to the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £360, which constituted the second item? Personally he had no desire to take two divisions, especially at that late hour of the night, and probably the Chancellor of the Exchequer would prefer that the decision of the Committee should be taken upon the two items together.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he was afraid that by the Rules of the House it would be necessary to decide upon one item at a time.

MR. LABOUCHERE wished to know whether, in that case, he would be precluded from moving the reduction of the Vote by the minor sum?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member would be in Order in moving the reduction of the larger sum first, and of the smaller sum afterwards.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that, under those circumstances, he would move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £548 9*s.* 4*d.*

MR. SEXTON wished to know, as a point of Order, whether the Motion to reduce the Vote by £548 9*s.* 4*d.* would preclude any other Member from moving the reduction of the Vote by a larger sum? He himself desired to move the reduction of it by the sum of £1,147 18*s.*, payable to Surgeon Wheeler for attendance on Mr. Shaen Carter, in pursuance of a verdict against the Crown, given in the Court of Exchequer in November, 1883.

THE CHAIRMAN said, it would still be competent for the hon. Member to move a reduction to that effect.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Item of £548 9*s.* 4*d.*, for Fees paid on the Installation of His Royal Highness Prince George Frederick Ernest Albert of Wales as Knight of the Garter, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

MR. HIBBERT said, that though it had always been the practice to include these fees in the Estimates, there was the strongest reason for doing so in the present case, which was that of a Royal Prince. The fees themselves varied from £130 down to £1, and were paid to Garter King-at-Arms and other officers who attended the installation.

MR. LABOUCHERE remarked, that, if his hon. Friend could give no further information upon the matter, he should certainly divide the Committee against this item.

MR. PICTON said, he did not think that the Secretary to the Treasury had improved matters by the explanation he had given. There was a strong feel-

ing throughout the country that the public money ought not to be voted to individuals except in return for work done, and the work done ought to represent value received. The matter was very different now from what it used to be in olden times, when these fashions and ceremonies were of much more importance. [*Cries of* "Oh!"] He knew that whenever an hon. Member alluded in that House to the opinions of the millions outside, a large number of whom were about to be enfranchised for the first time, he was received with something like ridicule. Nevertheless, the opinion of these people was of great importance, and would prove to be of the highest importance hereafter. However foolish it might be thought within that House, nothing created so much irritation of feeling in the minds of the working classes as these petty Votes on behalf of distinguished persons who were not believed to have done any work that would justify the payment. He would certainly support the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) in an earnest protest against this Vote.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR agreed with the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, that the explanation of the Secretary to the Treasury rather aggravated than mitigated the absurdity of the first item in the Vote. It only required the explanation of the hon. Member to make the whole proceeding much more extravagant than the wildest creation of Mr. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan. What was the Vote? It had been described as one that was necessary in order to carry out an ancient custom, and the money appeared to have been expended in buying banners, helmets, and swords—exactly what the stage manager at the Savoy did in placing upon the boards one of the operas of the two distinguished gentlemen he had had just named. He wondered how an expenditure of this sort could be tolerated with patience by any enlightened Assembly. He thought everybody would acknowledge that they had now made a certain progress in civilization, and that it was not necessary to adopt nowadays the dress and customs of the Middle Ages. What would be thought of the hon. Gentleman himself if he took it into his head to come down to the House preceded by banners, wearing doublet and hose, and accompanied by all the paraphernalia which might have distinguished a Secretary of State in the days of James I. He saw that the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) laughed at that suggestion. He would ask the Committee to imagine the late Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) presenting himself to their notice at the Bar of the House in a "nodding plume," with his casque down, with retainers bearing banners, helmets, and swords, and all of it paid for out of the public money! The whole thing belonged to the region of *opera bouffe*, and not to the civilization of the 19th century. He hoped the Committee would strike a blow at such ridiculous absurdity.

Mr. HEALY said, that his hon. Friend the Member for Galway (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had referred to the late Secretary to the Treasury. That hon. Gentleman had had the advantage of defending these Votes when he occupied a seat upon the Treasury Bench; but now the Committee were able to look upon him in a different light from the seat he at present occupied below the Gangway. He certainly should like to know what were the present views entertained by the hon. Gentleman. They knew very well what his views were when he sat as a Minister above the Gangway, and they were very anxious now to watch his performances from the seat he occupied at present below the Gangway. He certainly hoped the Committee would receive some guidance from the hon. Gentleman, and that he would be able to assure the Committee, in continuing to support these Votes, that he had no sympathy with the opposition which was raised by the Radical Members. Personally, he (Mr. Healy) did not think that if they got good government it ought to be too cheap, and he would have no objection to pay £3,000 or £4,000 by way of extras in order to secure good government; but, at the same time, he thought it was desirable that they should thrash a matter of this kind out to its logical conclusion, and see what it was they were called upon to vote. While there was a Monarchy, it must be taken for better or worse. If it were necessary to have banners and helmets, he should vote for them; but he rather fancied these things were out of date.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 25; Noes 56: Majority 31.—(Div. List, No. 54.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that, no doubt, the persons conveyed across the Channel in special packets, and for which service the sum of £360 was charged, were very distinguished persons; but the House had never been told on what ground those distinguished persons had special packets provided to convey them between Dover and Calais, and why, if they desired those special facilities, they should not pay for them themselves. He was aware that it had been said before now on the Treasury Bench, and would be said again that evening, no doubt, that Her Majesty had power to use the ships of the Royal Navy for this purpose, and that it was cheaper to hire a special packet for £40 rather than to have a man-of-war to carry Members of the Royal Family across the Channel. But he would point out that the practice of employing men-of-war would not exist very long, because everyone knew that there would be proposals for a reduction in the Navy if any of them were used for the purpose. There was in the Estimate a charge of £40 for conveying the Duchess of Mecklenburg from Calais to Dover, and a charge of £40 for bringing her back from Dover to Calais. With the highest respect, he did not see why the country should be called upon to pay £40 whenever this lady wished to visit this country. She was born, it was true, in this country, but he believed she had married a German Prince and that she was living in Germany; moreover, he believed that Parliament had voted her an income. The charge he was referring to, under the circumstances, rather hampered the pleasure felt at seeing the Duchess of Mecklenburg in this country. He hoped that the protests which were always raised on the part of Members of that House in regard to special packets for the conveyance of distinguished persons might be listened to. As an hon. Member (Mr. Picton) speaking on the last Vote had said, it was these little things which made the people angry. It was because the sums were small that they thought the distinguished persons could pay the amount themselves. When the distinguished persons went to the Continent, they started generally from Charing Cross; it might be that they travelled by special train, but whether that was so or not, they paid for it. He did not see why these absurdities should continue year after year in the shape of calls upon the House for payment, and, therefore, he begged to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £360, the amount of charge for the special packets.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Item of £360, for Special Packets for the conveyance of Distinguished Persons, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

MR. MOLLOY said, he should like to know why the Royal Yachts were not used for this service? He would ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it was not a fact that the three Royal Yachts were at the present time under repairs as usual? He believed that in the Estimates of last year they were charged for the repair of each of the Royal Yachts. He should like to hear from the hon. Gentleman if the Royal Yachts were under repair when this expense was incurred, and, if not, why they were not employed for carrying these distinguished persons across the Channel?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, that when this Vote was discussed last year, it would be in the recollection of hon. Members that he promised to look into some of the questions connected with it, and particularly with regard to the point just raised. He had gone carefully into the question, in order to see whether it would be possible to substitute for the special packets employed one of the Royal Yachts, and he would state to the Committee plainly what was the result of his inquiry. He found that for a very long time it had been customary for Members of the Royal Family, going to or returning from the Continent, to be conveyed in vessels of the Royal Navy, and formerly two or three sailing ships were used expressly for that purpose. Hon. Members would remember that in the early days of the use of steam, there were no contract steamers, but small steam vessels of the

Navy were used; and that subsequently it was arranged that contracts should be entered into with the Steamship Companies for the service. Accordingly, these small naval steamers, and subsequently contract chart steamers, were used as the old sailing ships had been. He might remind the Committee that there was at the present time a charge in the Estimates for the conveyance of the suite of Her Majesty and her horses and carriages. Now, the question had been asked by the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Molloy) whether it would be more economical to make use of the Royal Yachts for this service. But he would point out that those Yachts drew too much water to admit of their being used between Dover and Calais, and between Folkestone and Boulogne. Were vessels specially built for the purpose, he was satisfied it would be less economical; and, therefore, having stated the ancient custom, and what he believed would be the result of the change suggested, he trusted the Vote would be allowed to pass.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 30; Noes 54: Majority 24.—(Div. List, No. 55.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SEXTON said, that, no doubt, the fulness of the right hon. Gentleman's reply on the subject of conveyance of distinguished persons had been appreciated by the Committee; but there were several other items in this Vote which gave rise to some speculation, and as to which he would like to hear an explanation. The first item was a charge for Surgeon Wheeler for attendance upon Mr. Shaen Carter in November, 1883. He asked why it was necessary to pay for attendance on Mr. Shaen Carter, and if it were necessary, why one of the most eminent surgeons in Ireland had been engaged to attend him? He believed that he was the victim of an outrage; but many other outrages upon persons had been committed, and the Government had not thought fit to take the victims under their especial care. He and his hon. Friends desired to know what were the special facts which induced the Government to assume financial responsibilities with regard to the injuries of Mr. Carter? Why had the Government repeatedly refused to pay for injuries caused by the weapons of their agents in Ireland? Hon. Gentlemen on those Benches knew of men, women, and children who had been wounded by the bayonets of the Government police, and they knew of innocent persons who had been cast into prison and afterwards released; but the Government had never placed 5*s.* on the Estimates to compensate them. He thought they were entitled to claim that compensation should be given in cases where the Government were responsible for the injuries inflicted. Then there was a charge for a gratuity of £500 to the Commissioner of Valuation for services given to the Government, and he complained that there was nothing whatever in the Estimates to show what the services were. He should be glad to receive an explanation of this charge. He found also a charge for the collection of compensation and fines under the Act of 1882, with regard to which he said that the collectors had not very much to do, according to the testimony of the Judges. He thought this money might very well have been collected without any charge being placed on the country, and he would be glad to hear when the money had been collected, and under what circumstances the charge was made. He would also be glad to know what was the misconduct on the part of the Crown Solicitor for which Mrs. Eliza Colgan received a compassionate grant of £250. There was one other item in the Vote to which he took exception—namely, £1,000 to

"The Right Honourable A. W. Peel, equipage money on election as Speaker of the House of Commons."

In the Public Service of this country there appeared to be a great tendency to multiply the number of outfits; indeed, there was one noble Lord who received as many as three outfits in one year.

THE CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Gentleman was not in Order in referring to the item of £1,000 for Mr. Speaker's outfit. A division had been taken on the third item of the Vote, and the £1,000 to which the hon. Gentleman referred was the second item. As a division had been taken on the item for "Special Packets for the conveyance of Distinguished Persons," the hon Gentleman was not in order in the remarks he was now making.

MR. SEXTON said, he had not much to say upon the point. If he could not comment upon the item, he should move, without reference to any particular item, to reduce the Vote by the sum of £1,000. The Committee would understand his object in moving such a reduction.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £7,409, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1885, for the Repayment to the Civil Contingencies Fund of certain Miscellaneous Advances."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

MR. HEALY said, the ruling of the Chairman, as he understood it, was that the Committee could not divide against the item of £1,000 for the Speaker's outfit. The Question put from the Chair was that a sum of £8,409 be granted to Her Majesty to defray certain charges. Surely, therefore, there was nothing to prevent hon. Members from referring to a particular £1,000 in that amount. He did not want to deprive Mr. Peel of his equipage money—the right hon. Gentleman could have £500,000 for aught he (Mr. Healy) cared—but this was a Vote for £8,409 for Civil Contingencies; and were the Committee to be told that because an hon. Gentleman chose to challenge a succeeding Vote, they were to be debarred from debating, for instance, the item for—

"Fees paid on the Installation of His Royal Highness Prince George Frederick Ernest Albert of Wales as Knight of the Garter?"

THE CHAIRMAN said, his ruling was quite plain. It would be quite competent for the hon. Member for Sligo to move to reduce the Vote, but not to reduce it with particular reference to the item of £1,000 for the Speaker's equipage money. Inasmuch as a succeeding item had been disposed of, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) was in error in supposing the Committee could discuss the Vote for the installation fees of His Royal Highness Prince George Frederick Ernest Albert of Wales as Knight of the Garter, or the item for the Speaker's equipage money.

MR. HEALY understood that the Question the Chairman put on the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere was that the item of £360 for "Special Packets for the conveyance of Distinguished Persons" be omitted. Because it was decided that the item should stand part of the Vote, was he (Mr. Healy) excluded from going into other items?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Gentleman cannot discuss an item preceding the one which has been disposed of. He is quite within his right to debate and take a division upon any subsequent item.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA asked if a division, taken upon the proposal to reduce the Vote by £1,000, would necessarily apply to Mr. Speaker's outfit?

THE CHAIRMAN: I have stated it could not apply to that item. That item cannot now be debated. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) has proposed to reduce the whole Vote by £1,000, and that he is perfectly competent to do.

MR. GRAY asked if a division taken on the Motion to reduce the whole sum by £1,000 would preclude discussion on any particular item?

THE CHAIRMAN: The only items that are precluded from discussion up to the present moment are three, because a division has been taken on the third. They are the installation fees of His Royal Highness, the Speaker's equipage money, and the item for special packets.

MR. GRAY followed the remarks of the Chairman; but what he wanted to know was, whether a division on the Motion to reduce the whole Vote by £1,000 would preclude discussion on any of the items?

THE CHAIRMAN: No. None of the items subsequent to that of £360 for special packets will be precluded from discussion.

MR. CALLAN: If the Motion to reduce the Vote by £1,000 is carried, to what item will that reduction be applied?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): That would be in the discretion of the Government, and we shall resist the Motion on that ground. Of course, it would be quite competent for the Committee to reduce the Vote.

MR. HEALY said, he hoped that now they had got the ruling of the Chair they would conform to it strictly. The items upon which he proposed to make some observations were those with re-

gard to Mr. Shaen Carter, the gratuity to the Commissioner of Valuation for services rendered to the Irish Government, and the compassionate grant to Mrs. Eliza Colgan. He quite agreed that it was necessary to put down the sum of £1,147 18*s.* in respect of Surgeon Wheeler's attendance on Mr. Shaen Carter. Nobody knew that better than the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr Walker). The actual facts of this case, however, were concealed from the Committee There was a sum of £500 for law expenses which was not included in this Vote. He asked a Question on this subject on the 11th of February last year, and the Government now put down only the exact amount of the verdict given in favour of Mr. Wheeler. The Question he asked last year was—

"By whose advice was Surgeon Wheeler's demand against the Government (for attendance on a wounded landlord) resisted, whether it was deposed in evidence that the Government were willing to pay him £700, while his claim was £1,147 18*s.*, whether the Government employed the Attorney General, the Solicitor General, and Mr. Dodd (instructed by Mr Lane Joynt), to resist his claim before a jury, if he can state what amount was marked on the briefs of the Government lawyers, and how much they obtained as 'refreshers,' whether it is the fact that the Government ultimately admitted in Court the full claim of Surgeon Wheeler, that the case was withdrawn from the jury, and that they had to pay, in addition to their own costs, the costs of three opposing Queen's Counsel, and, if he can state what the taxed costs of the Plaintiff amounted to, and how much the suit has cost the Government altogether beyond the £1,147 18*s.* originally claimed, which they subsequently admitted in Court was due to Surgeon Wheeler."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 428-9.)

The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland admitted to him that the taxed costs amounted to £208 14*s.* 7*d.*, and that the suit would cost the Government about £400, in addition to the £1,147 18*s.*; that was to say, the taxpayers were now called upon to pay in respect of this wounded landlord the sum of £1,147 18*s.*, and in addition to put into the pockets of the Irish lawyers about £400. Surgeon Wheeler earned the money, but who were the people who gave the order that he should earn it; and who was the economical gentleman who raised a false issue, and therefore put all this money into the pockets of the Irish lawyers? It was understood that the late Mr. Burke gave the order to Mr. Wheeler to put down attendances on Mr. Shaen Carter Mr. Burke being dead, there was no possibility of ascertaining whether Mr Shaen Carter's story was right or wrong. The whole matter then came before Mr. Hamilton, Under Secretary, who with Scotch acumen, was in the habit of making reductions in the salaries of others in order to get advances in his own—thought it was a fine thing to resist Mr Surgeon Wheeler's claim of £1,100 against the Irish Government. He advised the Irish Government to resist the claim in Court, and they did so, with the result that after two days' litigation they had to consent to a verdict being returned against them, and the country was put to the needless cost of £400 owing to Mr. Hamilton's—Sir Robert Hamilton's, he begged that gentleman's pardon—attempted economy. Now, this was the way government was carried on in Ireland. That distinguished physician Mr. Surgeon Wheeler was, through some means or other—he Mr Healy did not know how—induced to take long journeys from Dublin to Mayo, and his charge for every attendance was 100 guineas, or some such enormous sum. Of course, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin City (Dr. Lyons) would understand that matter very much better than he (Mr. Healy) did. Well, Surgeon Wheeler charged the money—he was quite right, if he were invited to attend Mr. Shaen Carter, to charge Government prices. That being so, what was the duty of the Government? They knew that Mr. Surgeon Wheeler attended Mr. Shaen Carter; but Sir Robert Hamilton, with his new-found economy, came into Dublin Castle fresh as paint, and upon his advice they said—"Oh, we will dispute your bill." Having disputed the bill, and having come to the point of the bayonet—so to speak—and having got Mr. Surgeon Wheeler into Court, and compelled him to prove by experts what he had a right to charge, they knuckled down and said—"We shall have to pay." The present Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) was the only person who could be congratulated on this Vote, because he was Counsel for Mr. Surgeon Wheeler and had the satisfaction of beating the Government. Now, however, he had the satisfaction of defending the Government The

hon. and learned Gentleman's position was certainly one of extraordinary novelty. In Queen Street the hon. and learned Gentleman was found denouncing the conduct of the Government for refusing Mr. Surgeon Wheeler's paltry fee of £1,147 18*s.*; but now the Committee would have the luxury of hearing the learned Solicitor General on the part of the Government say the thing was all right from first to last, and nobody deserved his money better than Mr. Surgeon Wheeler. The litigation must have been very satisfactory from the hon. and learned Gentleman's point of view, for it unquestionably put a very large sum in his own pocket. The next item to which he (Mr. Healy) desired to direct the attention of the Committee was that of £250 paid as the compassionate grant to Mrs. Eliza Colgan, in consideration of the loss caused by the misconduct of an Irish Crown Solicitor. The only complaint he had to make about the item was that it was too small. This unfortunate woman was the widow of a man who was sentenced to penal servitude for life. The convict died, and the Crown Solicitor, Mr. Meara, collared all Mrs. Colgan's effects; and he passed on his office by some extraordinary jugglery, which was only known in Dublin Castle, to Mr. Gerrard, who at present held the position of Crown Solicitor. This woman had been trying to get justice against Mr. Meara for the last 11 years; she had been wearing out the flags of Dublin Castle trying to get some satisfaction from the Irish Government, and at last she got a Question put in this House respecting her case, and the next thing that was heard was that she was to get £250. He supposed that if she got her rights she would receive at least £1,250. This poor wretched woman, who had for years been making pilgrimages to that shrine of piety—Dublin Castle—could not get 1*d.* until her case was taken up by a Member of the House of Commons, and then she was granted the paltry sum of £250. Either the woman was entitled to get her payment in full, or she was not entitled to 1*d.* When he (Mr. Healy) put a Question to the then Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Trevelyan), the right hon. Gentleman said he had great sympathy with Mrs. Eliza Colgan, but he could do nothing for her. Now, however, the sympathy of the Government had led them to propose a grant to her of £250. Why had she only to receive £250? She was swindled by a Crown Solicitor who trafficked his office, and got a full money payment for it from Mr. Gerrard. Why should not Mr. Gerrard pay Mrs. Colgan's claim in full? He took the offer for better or for worse; he took the office with all its rights, wrongs, and responsibilities; and therefore he should be compelled to pay the sum that his predecessor, Mr. Meara, swindled Mrs. Colgan out of. Mrs. Colgan was a poor woman of 60 years of age. She had no means under Heaven of going to law, and for 10 years she was endeavouring to obtain justice, but failed to do so until the Government were awoke up by a Question put in that House. And now they put her off with a paltry sum of £250. The item required some explanation. Perhaps the Government would tell the Committee why Mrs. Eliza Colgan was kept out of her money for 10 or 11 years—the interest on which by this time would have come to £250—and why they should not compel Mr. Gerrard to make up the defalcations of his predecessor? Now, in this Vote there was a sum of £500 set down as a gratuity to the Commissioner of Valuation for services rendered to the Irish Government. He quite agreed with his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) that the information given in respect of these Votes was extremely scanty. If the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) would accept a piece of advice from him, it would be this—that the Government should give as much information as they could on paper, because if they did so much debate would be saved in the House. Would any set of hon. Members in the House object to the four or five lines of type, or the few pages more that would be necessary to add to the Votes if full information were given? Look at the time they would save. In his opinion they would save hours every night if a little *précis* of the reasons for the Vote were given. Under the present system the Committee had to rely upon the Secretary to the Treasury giving all necessary information. He (Mr. Healy) had been surprised at the manner in which Secretaries to the Treasury got up their work, especially the hon. Gentleman the Member for Liskeard (Mr.

Courtney). That hon. Gentleman was always ready at a moment's notice to give information, and he (Mr. Healy) thought he would be worthily followed in this respect by his distinguished Successor (Mr. Hibbert). Considerable time would have been saved by an explanation appearing upon the foot of the Vote itself as to the gratuity of £500 to the Commissioner of Valuation. He (Mr. Healy) supposed the gratuity was made for services rendered in connection with the Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution Bill); but he should be glad to receive definite information on the subject. Then, again, £99 7*s.* 6*d.* was charged on the Vote for—

"Payment on account of the collection of compensation under the provisions of the Crimes Act (Ireland), 1882."

Was this in Dublin? [The Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) nodded assent.] Very well. He would like to know why that £99 7*s.* 6*d.* should not come out of the amount paid to Mr. Field? He would like English Members, especially economical gentlemen like the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), to remember that when they were voting for blood-money under the Prevention of Crime Act they did not think that such sums as £99 7*s.* 6*d.* would be charged on the general taxpayers of the United Kingdom. According to the theory of the Prevention of Crime Act the expenses of collecting the compensation given to Mr. Field should be borne by the citizens of Dublin. If the authorities asked him (Mr. Healy), as a citizen of Dublin, for any part of the money, they would certainly have to sell out his goods and chattels. Indeed, nothing would give him greater satisfaction than to see a sheriff come up to his door to collect 3*s.* 9*d.*, which he presumed would be required from him personally. The attempt would certainly be worth the money. He invited the Government to endeavour to collect the tax from him. All he could say was that if the Dublin people would take the same course that he would do under the circumstances they would knock a great deal more fun out of the Prevention of Crime Act than they at present got out of it. Why was this £99 7*s.* 6*d* to fall upon the general taxpayers of the country? Why should not the hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), in the interests of his constituents, resist the attempt to put blood-money, which ought to fall on the iniquitous City of Dublin, on the taxpayers of the country who by their rule in Ireland simply brought about the crime they sought to repress? In his opinion, the £99 7*s.* 6*d.* ought to be deducted from the £3,000 which was paid to Mr. Field. He noticed that £452 3*s.* 6*d.* was set down for the "purchase of the reliquary of St. Lachtin, to be deposited in the Royal Irish Academy." He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers) on having asked for that amount. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had acted throughout the matter handsomely, and the arrangement which had been made had been one which had given the utmost satisfaction throughout Ireland. He (Mr. Healy) hoped the practice which the right hon. Gentleman had to some extent inaugurated—namely, of collecting Art treasures in Dublin, would be continued in the future. These were the remarks he had to make upon this Vote. He would like to have some explanation as to why the Government did not set at the foot of the Vote the reason of the gratuity to the Commissioner of Valuation; and why the £99 7*s.* 6*d.* for the collection of compensation under the Prevention of Crime Act was not paid out of the money granted to Mr. Field?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, he could not resist the temptation to enter into a little explanation of the payment to Mr. Surgeon Wheeler. It appeared that Mr. Shaen Carter was in March, 1882, fired at and wounded severely. His life was in danger. He was then at Belmullett, some 40 miles from the nearest railway, and by his desire the Resident Magistrate in the district telegraphed to the late Mr. Burke, who was then Under Secretary, suggesting that Dr. Wheeler—one of the most eminent surgeons in Ireland—should be sent out to attend him. Accordingly, Surgeon Wheeler waited upon Mr. Burke. As they all knew, Mr. Burke was afterwards assassinated, and he was not alive to give his account of the transaction when the matter came to a conflict between Mr. Surgeon Wheeler and the Irish Government. But Mr. Burke left a memorandum behind him,

which stated that Surgeon Wheeler was to be paid by the Government if Mr. Shaen Carter was not able to pay him. As a matter of fact, Mr. Shaen Carter's rents had been so cut down by the Land Commissions that he was now in comparative poverty. Mr. Surgeon Wheeler paid Mr. Shaen Carter several visits; and as he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) had already stated, Mr. Shaen Carter was 40 miles from the nearest railway, Surgeon Wheeler claimed his proper amount. ["How many visits did he pay?"] When Mr. Shaen Carter was removed to Dublin, Mr. Surgeon Wheeler paid him some visits in that City. He paid him in all seven visits at Belmullett; and therefore it could be easily calculated how the amount charged was arrived at—Mr. Surgeon Wheeler having sent in a claim for £1,147. The Government finding the memorandum Mr. Burke left behind, which they were perfectly justified in assuming showed the terms on which Mr. Surgeon Wheeler was engaged, offered that gentleman a reduced sum of between £700 or £800, which they considered sufficient compensation for his visits. When the case came to be tried, Mr. Surgeon Wheeler refused the offer of the Government, and said that from several conversations he had had with Mr. Burke he imagined he was to be paid by the Government, quite irrespective of Mr. Shaen Carter. Mr. Burke being dead, there was no means of disproving that, and accordingly the Government must either concede the demand, or take the alternative of repudiating the agency of their own *employés*. He felt bound to disabuse the mind of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) on one point. The hon. and learned Gentleman had gone out of his way to make some observations about Sir Robert Hamilton. Now, Sir Robert Hamilton had nothing at all to do with the case. The person named Hamilton who was mentioned in the course of the proceedings was not Sir Robert Hamilton at all, but a gentleman named Thomas Hamilton, who was a Resident Magistrate, and who was acting as Secretary to Mr. Burke, and who, it appeared, was present at one or two of the visits which Mr. Surgeon Wheeler paid to Mr. Burke. Mr. Thomas Hamilton, when appealed to, was not in a position to contradict what Mr. Surgeon Wheeler alleged took place between himself and Mr. Burke, and therefore Mr. Hamilton could throw no light on the matter. In his (the Solicitor General for Ireland's) opinion, the Government, under such circumstances, very properly conceded the demand made by Surgeon Wheeler. With regard to the case of Mrs. Eliza Colgan, he did not understand that the hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had found any fault with the Government beyond the charge that the sum which had been paid to her was not large enough. The fact was, that a man named Matthew Colgan, as far back as 1853, was sentenced to death, but had the sentence commuted to penal servitude for life. The husband was possessed of certain property, which, by his conviction, became confiscated to the Crown, the wife having no right to it. The Authorities, however, agreed to settle it on the woman, and interest was paid to her on £500 until 1868. In that year she took a promissory note for the amount from Mr. Jeremiah Meara, the Crown Solicitor for Queen's County. This person subsequently became embarrassed, and left the country without settling with Mrs. Colgan. The circumstances were represented to the Irish Government, and as Meara had acted as their agent, it was decided to consider the case. The result of that consideration had been the payment to Mrs. Colgan of the sum named in the Estimate. He was acquainted with Mr. Gerrard, and could assure the Committee that he was a thoroughly trustworthy man. This gentleman had succeeded Mr. Meara as Crown Solicitor for Queen's County. [An hon. MEMBER: How?] He could not saw how. The Conservatives were then in power, and they were responsible for the appointment. But it could not be contended that Crown Solicitors were responsible for the acts of their predecessors. If such were the case, it would be very unfair to the incoming officials, and it might be found difficult to get gentlemen to take upon themselves the responsibility.

MR. HIBBERT said, the hon. and learned Gentlemen the Solicitor General for Ireland had explained all the items except that in regard to which Mr. Ball Greene had been mentioned. He wished to explain to the hon. and learned Mem-

ber for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) and the other hon. Gentlemen who had referred to the matter, that that had nothing whatever to do with the Boundary Commission. The item had reference to services performed in 1884, long before the Boundary Commission was ever thought of. The services were connected with several important Bills, Mr. Ball Greene having given important information and assistance to the Government. The first measure in regard to which this assistance had been rendered was the Arrears Act of 1883; then assistance was given in connection with the Land Act and the Franchise Act. Those were the principal measures in respect of which the £500 was paid. He did not understand that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton) who had brought the subject forward objected to the payment. He presumed the hon. Member only wished for an explanation as to how it was that such a sum was paid to the recipient of so large a salary. The hon. and learned Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) said the Government should give more information in the Estimates, and he (Mr. Hibbert quite agreed that it would save a great amount of trouble if that course were adopted. On the other hand, they must remember that if the Government gave too much information, it might lead to a vast amount of discussion and a great waste of time. On the whole he quite agreed with the hon. and learned Member that it was the best course to take Parliament into their confidence as much as possible.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he did not object to a payment being made to Mr. Ball Greene for additional services rendered; but he held that £500 was an exorbitant sum for the services rendered.

MR. HEALY said, he rose for the purpose of expressing his regret at having, a short time ago, mentioned the name of Sir Robert Hamilton by mistake. The name had misled him, and he would suggest that something should be done to enable hon. Members to distinguish with ease amongst individuals of the same name. He did not agree with the explanations which had been given. Evidently someone of the name of Hamilton was to blame, and the statements made on behalf of the Government did not carry conviction to his (Mr. Healy's) mind. The fact was admitted that this item for law costs had been incurred by contesting a claim which was now allowed to be fair and just. All the facts in connection with the case of Mr. Shaen Carter—all the facts concerning Dr. Wheeler's attendance upon him—ought to have been known to Mr. Hamilton. The Solicitor General for Ireland shook his head. Was he (Mr. Healy) to be told that Mr. Hamilton was not made acquainted beforehand with all the information that was put before the jury? Was he to be told that the case was put before a jury without Mr. Hamilton knowing its details? No doubt, every fact which was put before the jury had been put before the Irish Government; therefore he thought Mr. Hamilton ought to be made to pay the law expenses Either Surgeon Wheeler told a story to the jury which he did not tell to Mr. Hamilton, or Mr. Hamilton was responsible for misleading the Government and causing them to lose this £500. As to the case of Mrs. Eliza Colgan, the Solicitor General for Ireland had not yet seen his (Mr. Healy's) point as to this woman. It was this. The woman's husband was convicted 32 years ago. The state of the law was such at that time that, owing to the attempt of the man to poison his unfortunate wife, they were able to turn her into the poorhouse, and then seize upon the property which belonged to the husband. They now said that it was simply as an act of grace that they did not confiscate the husband's property in this way. But they appointed a trustee—this man Meara—and he absconded with the money. How they had allowed this man to make an arrangement with his successor and then to run out of the country, was still unexplained. The Solicitor General for Ireland had touched very lightly upon this man Gerrard having trafficked with Meara for the appointment of Crown Solicitor in Queen's County; but, as a matter of fact, he had taken the appointment subject to any charges there might be on Mr Meara's estate. What were Meara's liabilities which could not be disputed or denied? Would the Government lay that information on the Table? If they did not promise to give it, he (Mr. Healy) would move for it, and then they might be able to ascertain whether or not the present Crown Solicitor for Queen's County was responsible or not. If there was not

something shady in the business, why was not all this information forthcoming? It was a monstrous thing to say that as this unfortunate woman had been practically kept out of her money for 32 years, and had been swindled by Mr. Meara, an agent of the Government, the gentleman who succeeded Meara as the agent for the Government was not liable to make good the default of his predecessor in office. The woman had been deprived of her property for 17 years—since 1868. The woman's property was surely worth more than £500. What, then, had become of the balance? Where were the papers explaining the matter? Was it not a fact that Mr. Meara had never paid the woman anything? Was there not a question about a life assurance? Would the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant say whether or not Mr. Gerrard had ever touched any of the money Meara admitted himself indebted to the woman? Ought a Crown Solicitor to be allowed to leave the country without the Government being informed of it? Was it not as a trust that Meara had taken the money in hand, and, if it were so, was it not a trust that must descend to successive Crown Solicitors until properly discharged? The Solicitor General for Ireland had ridden very lightly over this subject, declaring that if one Crown Solicitor were to be held liable for the acts and deficiencies of his predecessor, there would be a pretty to do. Well, there might be in the case of such men as George Bolton; but that person, in his official capacity, had never had anything to do with a trust. He was responsible for defalcations as a swindler. But whose duty was it to induct Mr. Gerrard into Meara's office? Were they not bound to act in matters of this kind as auditors? Were they not bound to know that a trust involving a sum of £500 attached to Meara's office, and were they not bound to make Mr. Gerrard acquainted with the fact? How did Mr. Gerrard get the trust without having any assets? Were they to be told that Mr. Gerrard took over the office without having any accounts given to him? No doubt, Mr. Meara held the money as a trust, as it was not in his private name only, but in his name as Crown Solicitor, and the trust should, properly, attach to every Crown Solicitor who took office in Queen's County until it was discharged.

Mr. COURTNEY said, that perhaps he might be allowed to refer to one or two of the circumstances under discussion, as they had happened whilst he was Secretary to the Treasury, and, although he had not refreshed his memory with regard to them, he thought he was competent to deal with them. With regard to the case of Surgeon Wheeler, the facts were these. Surgeon Wheeler alleged that he had received authority from the Irish Government to go down and attend to this gentleman, Mr. Shaen Carter. It was not customary to put the brief of the plaintiff's evidence into the hands of the defendant before the trial, so that the Government were not cognizant of all the details of Surgeon Wheeler's contention. They had the evidence of Mr. Hamilton, who was a sort of Assistant Secretary to Mr. Burke, and who possessed a memorandum in Mr. Burke's handwriting to the effect that the Irish Government were not responsible; and on this ground, and also because the claim was excessive, it was resisted. The opposition to the claim came—he might incidentally say—from the Treasury in London, so that the blame should not be put upon Sir Robert Hamilton, who had been confused with Mr. Hamilton by the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Healy). After the plaintiff had made his case, it became necessary to ascertain how Mr. Hamilton could meet the evidence of Surgeon Wheeler, and it appeared that he had no recollection of the circumstances narrated by that gentleman, but could not take upon himself to go into the box to deny them. There was then no other course for the Government to pursue but to give way. They resisted no longer, and a verdict was given for the plaintiff.

Mr. HEALY: What was done with Mr. Hamilton?

Mr. COURTNEY said he thought the Irish Government were not very well pleased with the result, but it was not easy to do anything. Mr. Hamilton was not in a position to deny the conversation which was spoken to by Surgeon Wheeler, although, at the same time, he could not remember it. It was an unfortunate matter altogether. Surgeon Wheeler had been called upon in great haste, Mr. Shaen Carter being on the point of death. Surgeon Wheeler had the carefulness to make a note of

the transaction when it occurred, but Mr. Hamilton had not had that forethought. Mr. Hamilton's account of the conversation with Surgeon Wheeler was not recorded by the Government at the time; Mr. Hamilton's memory failed him, and the Government had to submit to an adverse verdict; but it would not have been right, under the circumstances, to have visited Mr. Hamilton with a severe censure for a mere act of failure of memory. As to the case of Mrs. Eliza Colgan, the woman's husband was convicted of attempted murder, and his property was necessarily forfeited to the Crown. The Crown waived the forfeiture however, and the property was put into the hands of the Crown Solicitor on behalf of Mrs. Colgan—not put into his hands officially, but handed over to him as to a trustee. The trustee kept it in his hands, and paid Mrs. Colgan interest on the money. He paid interest at the rate of 6 per cent, which was itself sufficient to show that he did not retain the money in his official capacity. Well, the Crown Solicitor absconded, and his affairs had to be wound up, and when this settlement was brought about Mrs. Colgan received her share of the assets as a creditor, and signed a deed entirely releasing the estate of the debtor from her claim. The position the woman took up towards Mr. Meara showed that she had trusted him in his private capacity. She was a foolish woman with no great aptitude for business, or she would never have done such a thing. The fact of her having received a note of hand was not brought to the notice of the Government until last year. Under all the circumstances of the case, the Government thought they would be acting fairly towards the woman by paying her over the amount stated in the Vote.

MR. LEAMY said, the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down said that money was left in the hands of the Crown Solicitor by this foolish woman, and he also understood the hon. Gentleman to say that the Government gave the £500 to Mr. Meara in trust for her. Was that not so? [Mr. COURTNEY: It was left with him.] Then it was the Government that trusted this man, and not the woman. The money had been originally forfeited by Mrs. Colgan's husband; but the Crown considered the case to be one in which the poor woman should not be deprived of the money, therefore they put it into the hands of an agent, who embezzled it. The least the Government could have done, under the circumstances, would have been to have come forward and given the poor woman something like the sum of which she had been robbed. He should like to have some information upon this point. With regard to the case of Surgeon Wheeler, that gentleman was no doubt entitled to receive a sum of money. There could be no question about that; but he should like to ask the Government why it was that they sent down an eminent surgeon of this kind, at an expense of £1,147, to attend upon a landlord who happened to have been shot at, when if it had happened to have been a peasant who was injured in this way they would have left him to be attended to by the dispensary doctor? The fact of the wounded person being a landlord was no reason why he should receive advice of a more expensive and eminent character than a poor man would have received under similar circumstances.

MR. HEALY: Mr. Shaen Carter's was blue blood.

MR. LEAMY said, they were told that Mr. Shaen Carter was lying at the time somewhere in the neighbourhood of Belmullett; but there was a poorhouse there, with a medical man in charge of it—a man who for a salary of £100 a-year had to attend upon thousands of patients and to travel, perhaps, hundreds and hundreds of miles in the course of the year. Why was not that official appealed to? It appeared to him (Mr Leamy) that this matter also required some explanation. He should like to know who was responsible? He did not suppose that it was the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and, unfortunately, the present Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant was not in Office at the time. Let him suppose, however, that instead of Mr. Shaen Carter a poor herd of his or a bailiff had been shot at and wounded, would the Government have thought it right to send down Surgeon Wheeler to attend him? No, they would not have taken any such course; and it certainly appeared to him that in acting as they had done in the case of Mr. Shaen Carter, they had indulged in a most extraordinary waste of money. Hon. Members knew that under the Prevention of Crime Act a landlord's life was valued at a much higher figure than a bailiff's,

and it appeared to him to be a great mistake to administer legislative enactments in this way. It had a tendency to induce ignorant men to believe that a landlord's life was more valuable than a peasant's; but in the sight of God and man the life of the poorest peasant was as valuable as that of Mr. Shaen Carter. To refer again to the case of Mrs. Colgan, the Government had agreed to grant her £250. It was no use for the Irish Members to ask that the grant should be increased, he knew, and it was not in their power to move an increase; but he would ask why had the Government allowed 16 or 17 years to elapse before they gave this money to the woman? Did they not think that the woman having been in poverty for so long deserved a larger sum? £500 had been handed over in trust for her to an agent of the Government, and the Government should be responsible for his default. They knew that their agent had betrayed the trust they had imposed upon him, and the least they might do, he thought, would be to make up the original amount. God knew, they spent money enough on wars, and in murdering people who never did them any wrong. They could easily spare a few pounds for this poor woman, whose money had been embezzled by their agent, and who had never wronged them in any way.

Mr. HEALY said, the woman had now been done out of her money for a considerable period, and he would like to make an earnest appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject. Here was a poor woman whose life had been attempted by her husband. She escaped the poison, and the Government spoke of their not forfeiting the husband's property as an act of grace. They allowed her the £500—her own property. He felt bound to appeal to the Government to consider the case of this poor old wretched woman now far advanced in years. Was it at all a fair thing, seeing the way in which she had lost her money, to keep her out of the small balance? He hoped it would be borne in mind that since the year 1868 she had been deprived of the interest she would have been entitled to upon it, and that, in itself, amounted to a considerable sum. He therefore appealed to the Government to wipe out the matter altogether, and hand over to this poor woman the remainder of the sum to which she was fairly entitled.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): I know nothing whatever of this case; but I will ask my right hon. Friend the Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant to send me over the full particulars, and I will see what will be proper to do in the matter.

Mr. O'BRIEN thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the offer he had made, and would express a wish that the spirit manifested by the right hon. Gentleman might be extended to the whole of the Treasury Bench. He was afraid that the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland had given a very inadequate excuse for sending a special Dublin surgeon, at a very high expense, to the extreme end of the County Mayo. The hon. and learned Gentleman told them that Mr. Shaen Carter was poor; but it would appear that he had obtained compensation under the Prevention of Crime Act for the injury he had sustained, and the least that could be expected from him was that he would give some contribution towards his doctor's bill. Surely, the hon. and learned Gentleman must be aware that it was quite possible to obtain medical assistance at Belmullett, and so far there had been no explanation given of any difficulty in Mr. Shaen Carter's case which required special surgical treatment, and which no local doctor could have dealt with. Why should it have been necessary to procure the assistance of a fashionable doctor from Dublin, with a fee of £100 a visit, and his travelling expenses for many miles? Unfortunately, many other persons were required to undergo serious surgical operations without any expense to Her Majesty's Government. As a matter of fact, the chance of Mr. Shaen Carter's recovery must have been somewhat diminished rather than increased by having to wait for surgical attendance until this gentleman could be brought down from Dublin to a place 40 miles from the nearest railway station. Even had it been necessary to obtain the services of a Dublin doctor, it must have been possible to have obtained one at a far less expense. He was afraid that the officials in Ireland were used to such liberal pickings themselves that they thought very little of a charge of £100 more or less, here or there, when it had to come

out of the public money. It was perfectly evident that for at least £500 of the sum which had been wasted Mr. Hamilton was responsible, and he did not see why that gentleman should not be asked to relieve the country of the burden, and pay it out of his own salary, seeing that this huge bill of costs had arisen out of his bungling. He protested altogether against the principle of sending down doctors to the relief of wounded landlords. The Government had more than once lent their troops to enforce the demands of the landlords, and he thought that was sufficient partizanship to display. Mr. Shaen Carter had been exercising the very stringent rights of a landlord, and, judging from the statement of the Solicitor General for Ireland himself, he must have exercised them in a manner which, to a considerable extent, would account for the feeling entertained towards him in the county of Mayo. At all events, it was not because a man was a landlord, or because he was a bad landlord, that the Government was to pay his doctor's bill for him when he came to any harm. His hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton had reminded the House that a poor girl in this very district of Belmullett had a bayonet driven through her breast by a policeman; but, in that case, did the Government send down a Dublin doctor to look after her? No provision whatever was made for her by the Ministry; and if this expenditure in the case of Mr. Shaen Carter was to be provided for by Parliament, every landlord in the country who was attacked by an exasperated people would have a right to the payment of his doctor's bill. There would be an appeal made to the Government by every bailiff and land grabber who happened to come to grief in the pursuit of his calling. From every aspect this payment was indefensible, and he appealed to the Chief Secretary for Ireland to assign some sort of reason why Mr. Shaen Carter had been selected for this anomalous expenditure. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to announce that Mr. Hamilton himself was clearly responsible to the extent at least of £500 of this money, notwithstanding the fact that the only punishment which had been visited upon Mr. Hamilton for his delinquency had been to promote him to the position of a Resident Magistrate in the North of Ireland. Certainly, he failed to see why this gentleman should not be made to pay at least £500 from the liberal profits he had made out of the disturbances in Ireland during the last few years.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that no one could know or be able to answer questions as to what the particular reasons were which induced the late Mr Burke to send Surgeon Wheeler to attend Mr. Shaen Carter. It must, however, be borne in mind that the circumstance occurred at a time of considerable excitement, and, no doubt, Mr. Burke had reasons which were sufficient to justify him in the course he took. At the same time, it was an extreme course, and there was no likelihood that such a course would be taken again. The Government themselves, by the course they had taken, showed that, in their opinion, it was a very extravagant proceeding. Nevertheless, these liabilities had been incurred, and they had to be met. It was stated by the hon. Member who spoke last that Mr. Hamilton ought to pay the money. Now, Mr. Hamilton was Assistant Secretary to Mr. Burke, and he was present at some of the conversations which occurred between Dr. Wheeler and Mr. Burke. When the trial came on Dr. Wheeler brought forward certain facts in reference to what had taken place. Mr. Hamilton was asked—"How are you going to contradict those statements?" He said at once—"I have no recollection of them; but I am not in a position to go into the witness-box and say that they did not really occur." No doubt, most hon. Members might occasionally find themselves in the same position. They could speak to the best of their recollection, but they were not in a position to swear as to certain facts. That was the whole state of the case. It must be borne in mind that it was not Mr. Hamilton who sent out Dr. Wheeler, but that he was simply acting at that time as the *quasi*-Assistant Secretary of Mr. Burke. If Mr. Burke had lived, he would, no doubt, have been able to explain the whole of this unfortunate matter. The only thing the Government could do under the circumstances was to come to the House of Commons for payment of these expenses, and he did not see what other course was open to them. So far as the sending

down of an eminent doctor to a distant part of the country was concerned, that could only be a matter for future consideration in the event of a similar case arising.

MR. KENNY said, he understood that the circumstances under which the Government sent Surgeon Wheeler down were these—that in the event of Mr. Shaen Carter not being able to afford to pay the bill of Surgeon Wheeler, the Government would then be liable for the debt. He wished to know how it was that the Government ascertained the inability of Mr. Shaen Carter to discharge the debt? He had had his rents reduced, it was true; but he had received compensation, and one item ought to be set against the other. He (Mr. Kenny) must confess that the Government had acted very unwisely in rendering themselves liable for the expenses incurred in sending Surgeon Wheeler down, and he thought they had endeavoured to get out of the difficulty in which they were placed in a very clumsy manner. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had promised to take into consideration the case of Mrs. Colgan. He (Mr. Kenny) understood that the man who had certainly swindled Mrs. Colgan was a man named Jeremiah Meara, who was the Crown Solicitor at the time. Now, he understood that the Crown Solicitor was still a man of the same name—Jeremiah Meara. It was not the same man, he believed, but the one was the son of the other. If that were really so, he should like to know how it was that a son of the swindler came to be appointed to the position which the father, who committed the swindle, originally occupied? If the present Crown Solicitor was the son of the person who swindled Mrs. Colgan, why not ask him to refund the money of which his father, beyond all doubt, had swindled Mrs. Colgan? He simply put this forward as a suggestion. The Law Officers knew that they had some sort of authority over the Crown Solicitor, and they might so use it as to secure from him the payment of the particular damage which his father had done.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), in introducing the subject, had raised a point which had almost been lost sight of in the valuable discussion which had since occurred. A great deal of the objection of the Irish Members to the Vote of £1,147 for the medical attendance upon Mr. Shaen Carter was founded, not merely upon the large amount of the Vote itself, but upon the contrast the Vote afforded to the action of the Government in reference to other persons. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated, with his usual courtesy, that he would look into the case of Eliza Colgan. He was perfectly sure that if many other cases were brought under the notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, justice would be done without hesitation. This was not a political matter; but the question was what the people would feel when they were told that £1,147 had been expended in medical costs upon a single landlord who was well able to pay for himself, while not 1*d.* was given to another unfortunate creature, or her family, who had been subjected to the deepest privations in consequence of her husband having been required to undergo the horrors of penal servitude for two years for a crime of which he was as innocent as any man in that House. That was the main ground of the complaint of the Irish Members against the Government for this excessive payment. He thought the action of the Government in sanctioning the payment of £1,147 for Mr. Shaen Carter, a landlord with a regular income, slightly reduced, no doubt, but still a regular income, and in the receipt of blood-money besides, was highly reprehensible. The idea that the Government should pay a doctor, under these circumstances, the large sum of £1,147, while the wife and children of an innocent convict were kept without 1*d.* of compensation for a crime he had never committed, was simply monstrous. He thought the contrast in the treatment of the two individuals was most instructive, but, at the same time, it was most scandalous. He found another item in the Votes of £4 11*s.* 1*d.* for a gold medal presented to Dr. Dutrieux for services rendered during the cholera epidemic in Egypt. It reminded him of one of the instructive essays of Mr. Herbert Spencer, who pointed out the contrast between the splendid statues erected in prominent parts of the Metropolis to Sir Henry Havelock, and similar persons, for military services, and that which was given

to a national and universal benefactor like Sir William Jenner in an unfrequented part of the Metropolis sacred to nursery-maids and their military admirers. The sum of £4 11*s.* 1*d.* was presented in the shape of a medal to an eminent man who had rendered great services during the cholera epidemic in Egypt, while the same Vote contained an item of £1,174 for a Dublin doctor who had been called in to attend an Irish landlord with a few slugs in his leg. And this was not all. The same Vote contained an item for £548 for fees in connection with the exhibition of banners, helmets, and swords upon the installation of His Royal Highness Prince George Frederick Ernest Albert of Wales, and £1,000 for an equipage allowance to Mr. Speaker. What a contrast that afforded to the treatment of Brian Kilmartin, who had been kept for two years in penal servitude under the terrible imputation of attempted assassination. He sincerely hoped that some sort of explanation would be given of these anomalous circumstances.

Mr. GRAY said, he desired to call attention to an item included in the Vote of £71 12*s.* 11*d.* for repayment in respect of forfeited Post Office Savings Banks' deposits. Some years ago, he had called the attention of the then Postmaster General to the system of forfeiting Post Office deposits when they exceeded the legal amount. It had sometimes occurred that a man, under a mistaken notion that he could deposit his money more safely in the Post Office Savings Bank, opened an account in two offices. The maximum sum a man could deposit was, at that time, £200; but he thought it had now been increased to £250; and sometimes a man, without knowing that he was doing anything illegal or wrong—or even supposing he was doing wrong—without being acquainted with the penalty, opened two accounts in two separate Post Offices. In such a case, if the depositor died, and it was discovered that his accounts exceeded the maximum, every single deposit he had made was forfeited, and the family of the depositor were deprived of the savings of a lifetime. It appeared that in this particular case it was intended to refund to some person a sum of £71 12*s.* 11*d.* He wanted to know if that indicated an intention on the part of the Government not to appropriate the savings of these poor men again, or tod eprive their families of them? He should be glad to learn what the Vote meant, if it did not mean that.

Mr. HIBBERT said, this was the case of man named Patrick Kelly, who opened two accounts on the same day, one in his own name, and one in the name of William Kelly. This fact was reported to the Solicitor of the Post Office, and after inquiring into it, he came to the conclusion that the two accounts were opened with a fraudulent intention. It was subsequently discovered that the man acted through ignorance in opening the two accounts, and that he was not aware that he was breaking the law in doing so. The Treasury, after considering the matter, decided upon requiring the forfeit of the smaller account of £12 16*s.*, and upon repaying the amount of £71 12*s.* 11*d.* which had been deposited in another office. He thought that a very fair consideration had been shown in allowing the larger amount to be refunded, and only forfeiting the smaller one.

Mr. GRAY asked, if he was to understand that, where a man in ignorance, and without intending to do wrong, opened an account in two offices, the Crown proposed to take advantage of the man's ignorance and to forfeit his deposit? Was that the statement which the hon. Gentleman made? They had now heard from the hon. Gentleman's own lips that the man had acted in ignorance, and yet they were going to forfeit the £12 he had deposited.

Mr. HIBBERT said, the hon. Member (Mr. Gray) had misrepresented what he had stated. He had stated that, although the man had acted in ignorance, he had used the name of another person in order to open a second account. The Treasury had fully considered the circumstances, and they felt that, after the course which had been taken, they ought to inflict a certain amount of penalty; and, therefore, they had required the man to forfeit the smaller amount.

Mr. O'KELLY asked, by what right the Government undertook to appropriate this sum of £12, which did not belong to them?

Mr. HIBBERT said, that, as a matter of fact, they had the right of forfeiting both sums.

Mr. O'KELLY said, the hon. Gentleman admitted that the man acted in

ignorance, and did not know there was any penalty. [Mr. HIBBERT: That was so.] The contention of the Government was that the man was entitled to the £71 odd; and he failed to understand on what ground they appropriated the remaining £12 if the man had acted in ignorance, and was not aware that he was doing wrong. If the Government really considered that the transaction ought to be practically wiped out, and that they were bound to return the man the larger sum of £71 odd, upon what ground could they appropriate the other £12? It was equally the man's money. It did not belong to the Government, and in appropriating it they were simply stealing it.

MR. GRAY said, there still remained a question which he thought the hon. Gentleman would recognize as of some little importance. Cases of great hardship had come under his notice in which the Treasury had put this rule into operation after the death of the depositors, thereby punishing innocent persons. This was a case in which there was undoubtedly a hardship, and the hardship was shown by the facts he had elicited from the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Hibbert). The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer had that day, in replying to a Question addressed to him, said that he would be glad to consider any proposition by which he would be able to make up the probable deficit in the Budget of the year. Surely the right hon. Gentleman did not propose to make it up in this way. If this man had acted with a fraudulent intention, he could understand the Treasury declaring that they would take the entire amount; but when he found that they were ready to refund £71, it plainly showed that, in the belief of the Treasury, there was no fraudulent intention. As a general rule, persons who deposited money in the Post Office Savings Bank were not highly educated or intelligent; and seeing that in this case there was no fraudulent intention, he thought it was as highly culpable on the part of the Government to appropriate £12 of this money as it would have been to have appropriated the £71. The Government acknowledged that they had no moral right to do so, because they were going to refund it, although he granted that, technically, they had a legal right. But they had the same legal right to the £71 as they had to the £12, and the £12 was as much the man's property as the larger sum, and he had as much right to it. He did not think it was worthy of a great nation to avail themselves of a technical mistake of this kind, even if a man had attempted a little bit of sharp practice, and tried to get ½ per cent more than he would otherwise have been able to procure. He did not think it was worthy of a great nation to appropriate money in this fashion; and he hoped the Government would take the matter into consideration, and not act in this extremely harsh manner in confiscating the property of poor persons who might, through ignorance, or through an attempt to be a little too clever, commit a technical illegality.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, he did not think that the inference drawn by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Gray) followed from what his hon. Friend (Mr. Hibbert) had stated. Here was a man who on the same day deposited money in two different names in two different Post Office Savings Banks. It was not disputed that he had done so, and that he was liable to have both sums forfeited. The circumstances having been inquired into, it was considered a sufficient punishment for the offence committed that the man should forfeit the smaller amount deposited.

MR. GRAY said, he had heard the explanation given, and understood the question thoroughly. It was clear that if the Crown believed that this man had had a fraudulent intention, they would not have refunded any of the money, because, in that case, the money would have been very properly forfeited. It was perfectly plain, then, that the Crown knew there was no fraudulent intention, and that the man had acted with a perfectly innocent intention. He would have gained nothing by this double deposit.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS) said, the man admitted that he deposited the two amounts in order that he might get a pecuniary advantage to which he knew he was not legally entitled.

MR. GRAY said that, even if he could have gained 1 per cent in this way more than he could have obtained from an ordinary bank, he thought it

was an extremely harsh rule that the money should have been forfeited. It was unworthy of a great nation to aggrandize its finances by this rule under which the right hon. Gentleman considered himself justified in taking the money in question. He ventured to say that if this money had come into the hands of the right hon. Gentleman in his private capacity, although he might have a legal right, he would feel that he had no moral right to it.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, it was not a matter of rule, but a matter of law. They had tried to administer the law, as it seemed to them, fairly in the present case.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the law in this case was like the bye-laws of the Railway Companies, who were constantly making them of their own mere notion, and who appeared to think that, having done so, they were entitled to deprive passengers of their property. If the law was as the right hon. Gentleman had stated, he thought that the sooner it was amended the better. Assuming the worst, the man could gain very little in this transaction; he could gain no more than ½ per cent on £12 or £14; and because he had endeavoured to do that he was by law to be deprived of the principal sum. He agreed with the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) that the justice and equity of the case would be met if the man were deprived of the percentage only.

Mr. HIBBERT said, that hon. Members who had drawn attention to this case had found fault with the Government for allowing the money to be repaid. The fact was that the Treasury, taking a compassionate view of the matter, allowed the smaller sum only to be forfeited. He pointed out that if they had chosen to do so, the Government might have left the case in the hands of the Post Office to settle, and not laid it before the House at all.

Mr. GRAY said, he did not at all find fault with the money being refunded. He had called attention to the matter in order to express his hope that this precedent would not be followed in other cases, and that cases which he might direct attention to in future would be treated by the Government in a different spirit. His objection was not that in the present case the £12 had been forfeited, but that there had been any forfeiture at all.

Mr. HEALY said, that in this matter the Government had the banking interest to consider. He would like to know what the hon. Baronet the Member for the London University (Sir John Lubbock) would have said on this question had he been present? He thought that the banking interest was too strong for the Government. There was a point he desired to raise, and which he asked the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland to consider. It appeared that the taxpayers had paid no less a sum than £1,500 on account of Mr. Shaen Carter's injuries; and he asked whether that sum could be made to repay the whole, or any portion, of the sum of £1,100 paid to Surgeon Wheeler by the Government for attendance upon Mr. Carter?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, it was clear that the £1,500 could in no way be resorted to for the purpose of recouping the Government. Mr. Shaen Carter would not be liable.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 20; Noes 55: Majority 35.—(Div. List, No. 56.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(4) £3,533,650, Vote on Account, Civil Services and Revenue Departments, viz.:—

CIVIL SERVICES.

Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

Great Britain:—	£
Royal Palaces	6,000
Marlborough House	1,000
Royal Parks and Pleasure Grounds ..	20,000
Houses of Parliament	10,000
Public Buildings	30,000
New Admiralty and War Office ..	3,000
Furniture of Public Offices	2,000
Revenue Department Buildings ..	50,000
County Court Buildings	6,000
Metropolitan Police Courts	1,500
Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland ..	2,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom ..	50,000
Science and Art Department Buildings	3,000
British Museum Buildings	2,000
Harbours, &c. under Board of Trade ..	2,500
Rates on Government Property (Great Britain and Ireland)	80,000
Metropolitan Fire Brigade	2,500
Disturnpiked and Main Roads (England and Wales)	20,000
Disturnpiked Roads (Scotland) ..	5,000

	£
Ireland:—	
Public Buildings	30,000
Royal University Buildings	4,000
Science and Art Buildings, Dublin ..	2,000
Abroad:—	
Lighthouses Abroad	2,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings ..	5,000

Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments.

England:—	
House of Lords, Offices	6,000
House of Commons, Offices	6,000
Treasury, including Parliamentary Coun- [redacted]	10,000
Home Office and Subordinate Departments	15,000
Foreign Office	10,000
Colonial Office	0,000
Privy Council Office and Subordinate Departments	7,000
Board of Trade and Subordinate Departments	25,000
Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade	500
Charity Commission (including Endowed Schools Department)	7,000
Civil Service Commission	6,000
Exchequer and Audit Department ..	9,000
Friendly Societies, Registry.. ..	1,500
Land Commission for England ..	4,000
Local Government Board	40,000
Lunacy Commission	2,500
Mint (including Coinage)	20,000
National Debt Office	2,500
Patent Office	7,000
Paymaster General's Office	4,500
Public Works Loan Commission ..	1,500
Record Office	4,000
Registrar General's Office	8,000
Stationery Office and Printing ..	90,000
Woods, Forests, &c. Office of ..	4,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	8,000
Mercantile Marine Fund, Grant in Aid	- -
Secret Service	10,000
Scotland:—	
Exchequer and other Offices	500
Fishery Board	2,500
Lunacy Commission	1,000
Registrar General's Office	1,000
Board of Supervision	3,000
Ireland:—	
Lord Lieutenant's Household ..	1,000
Chief Secretary's Office	6,500
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	300
Local Government Board	10,000
Public Works Office	10,000
Record Office	1,000
Registrar General's Office	3,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey ..	6,000

Class III.—Law and Justice.

	£
England:—	
Law Charges	7,000
Criminal Prosecutions	[redacted],000
Supreme Court of Judicature ..	70,000
Wreck Commission..	2,500
County Courts	20,000
Land Registry	1,000
Revising Barristers, England ..	- -
Police Courts (London and Sheerness)	2,000
Metropolitan Police	100,000
Special Police	6,000
County and Borough Police, Great Britain	1,000
Convict Establishments in England and the Colonies	80,000
Prisons, England	60,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	70,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum ..	5,000
Scotland:—	
Lord Advocate, and Criminal Proceedings	10,000
Courts of Law and Justice	5,000
Register House Departments ..	4,000
Prisons, Scotland	15,000
Ireland:—	
Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	15,000
Supreme Court of Judicature ..	15,000
Court of Bankruptcy	1,500
Admiralty Court Registry	200
Registry of Deeds	3,000
Registry of Judgments	500
Land Commission	15,000
County Court Officers, &c.	[redacted],000
Dublin Metropolitan Police (including Police Courts)	[redacted],000
Constabulary	250,000
Prisons, Ireland	30,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools ..	25,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum ..	1,500

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

England:—	
Public Education	600,000
Science and Art Department ..	50,000
British Museum	30,000
National Gallery	1,000
National Portrait Gallery	600
Learned Societies, &c.	3,500
London University..	2,000
University Colleges, Wales	- -
Deep Sea Exploring Expedition (Report)	1,000
Transit of Venus, 1882	50
Scotland:—	
Public Education	120,000
Universities, &c.	3,000
National Gallery	400
Ireland:—	
Public Education	150,000
Teachers' Pension Office	500
Endowed Schools Commissioners ..	200
National Gallery	300
Queen's Colleges	500
Royal Irish Academy	100

Class V.—Foreign and Colonial Services.

Diplomatic Services	[redacted]
Consular Services	40,000

	£
Slave Trade Services	1,000
Suez Canal (British Directors) ..	400
Colonies, Grants in Aid	5,000
South Africa and St. Helena ..	10,000
Subsidies to Telegraph Companies ..	9,000
Cyprus, Grant in Aid	- -

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

Superannuation and Retired Allowances	120,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c.	1,000
Pauper Lunatics, England	- -
Pauper Lunatics, Scotland	- -
Pauper Lunatics, Ireland	50,000
Hospitals and Infirmaries, Ireland ..	4,000
Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiency	- -
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain ..	500
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Ireland	600

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Temporary Commissions	5,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	2,500
Total for Civil Services ..	£2,863,650

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

Customs	100,000
Inland Revenue	100,000
Post Office	100,000
Post Office Packet Service	20,000
Post Office Telegraphs	350,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£670,000
Grand Total	£3,533,650

THE CONSTABULARY (IRELAND)—THE FREE FORCE.

MR. PARNELL said, that the question he was about to address to the Treasury Bench was one which might more properly be put to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, yet the right hon. Gentleman, not having been in Office at the time to which he was about to refer, was not so well acquainted with the circumstances of the case as the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, and, as a matter of fact, was not responsible. Indeed, he (Mr. Parnell) might say that neither he nor the late Chief Secretary for Ireland were responsible for the subject of his inquiry, since the latter had practically left Office at the time—that was to say, his health having failed, he did not attend the House, and the duties of his Office consequently devolved on the hon. and learned Gentleman. The question he wished to ask the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland was this. What had become of the Bill which he promised, last August, he would introduce at the commencement of the Session, for the purpose of enabling the Lord Lieutenant to distribute the Free Police Force every three years, instead of quinquennially? The hon. and learned Gentleman would recollect the circumstance now that he called it to his mind. He would remember that, in consequence of the discussion which took place in Committee upon the Vote for the Irish Constabulary, the Government, through the mouth of the hon. and learned Gentleman, were induced to promise, in the event of Lord Spencer assenting, that power should be taken to enable Lord Spencer to distribute the men of the Free Force up to the amount they were entitled to by Act of Parliament. He (Mr. Parnell) then pointed out that the strength of the Free Force was some 500 or 600 officers and men under the full amount, and that, in consequence of the Free Force not being up to its full strength, the extra police in Ireland were very much swollen in numbers. The arguments used by himself and his hon. Friends produced such an impression on the Irish Government that the hon. and learned Gentleman afterwards promised to introduce a non-contentious Bill, which should be passed through Parliament, for the purpose of enabling the Lord Lieutenant to redistribute every three years, instead of five years—that was to say, for the purpose of enabling him to distribute the Free Force at once. He had been expecting all through the Session to see a Notice given by the hon. and learned Gentleman to introduce this non-contentious Bill; but his patience had not been rewarded, for no such Notice had appeared. Therefore, he begged leave to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman what had become of this Bill; why he did not give Notice of its introduction; whether he intended to give Notice of its introduction; and whether he could give any explanation of the delay which had taken place? He would be glad to hear the Solicitor General for Ireland on all these points, and he would remind him that he received value in advance for the consideration of this Bill At a period of the Session when time was of great value to the Government, Irish Members gave up their right to continue the discussion, on the promise of the Prime

Minister that it should be discussed on Report, and that the Report on the said Vote should not be brought on after half-past 11 at night. Of course, the Government yielded to the justice of their claim; but, at the same time, they received a valuable consideration from Irish Members. Having previously given up their right to discuss the Vote in Committee, they afterwards gave up their right to discuss it on Report, in order to allow the Prime Minister to make a statement in regard to foreign affairs. Now, he would just refer to the statement of the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland, made on the Report of Supply. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that—

"When this Vote was under consideration an argument was brought forward by the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) in reference to the number of police for Ireland, as fixed by Act of Parliament; and the complaint was made that the free force was not fully distributed among the counties and cities of Ireland, and that, in consequence, a great grievance was imposed on the country. Now, the argument of the hon. Member had since that time been very carefully considered by him (Mr. Walker); and he confessed that it appeared to him that if it was a fact, as had been stated, that the free force of 10,000 men, over and above the ordinary vacancies taken at 5 per cent, was not really distributed, it was a case for favourable consideration; and, consequently, he was prepared to recommend that a communication should be made to the Lord Lieutenant to that effect. It it were found to be the fact that the free force was not fully distributed, the matter could only be remedied by legislation, because there was no means of remedying it, except at the quinquennial redistribution, which would not take place before 1887. If the grievance existed, legislation would be introduced for the purpose, and he would be prepared to introduce a provision, making the redistribution triennial instead of quinquennial, as at present. To give effect to the arrangement, a Supplementary Estimate would be brought forward by the Secretary to the Treasury."—(3 *Hansard*, [292] 232-3.)

Upon that statement it would be in the recollection of hon. Members that the Vote was allowed to go through. Up to the present time nothing further had been heard about the matter. The understanding was that the Government would have introduced the Bill during the Winter Session of Parliament were it not that they had pledged themselves to the position only to convene the Session for the purpose of passing the Franchise Bill, and that no other Government legislation should be brought forward. Therefore, no steps were taken during the Winter Session; but since then the new Session had practically recommenced, and he had been waiting to see the hon. and learned Gentleman introduce the Bill, and redeem his promise for the purpose of putting a stop to imposts on the Irish people which they were unable to pay.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he remembered the promise he made. The Bill might have been introduced within the last week; but it had not been brought in owing to the backward state of other Business before the House. He would, however, be prepared to give Notice of it within the next few days, and lay it on the Table of the House.

MR. PARNELL: Will it be confined to that point, or will other matter be introduced in it?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): I will explain the provisions of the Bill fully when it is laid on the Table of the House.

MR. PARNELL said, he should like to be informed upon the point now. He did not wish to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland to enter into the details of the Bill; but when this matter was being discussed last August it was distinctly understood—it was expressed in fact—that the Bill should be a non-contentious Bill. If the Government were going to introduce matter other than the alteration of the redistribution of the police from a quinquennial to a triennial term, he maintained that the promise of the hon. and learned Gentleman would not be kept. If other matter, repugnant and odious to him (Mr. Parnell) and his hon. Friends, and which they should feel compelled to oppose, were introduced in the Bill, it would be impossible for the measure to be passed this Session, or, at all events, a very long delay would take place before it was passed; whereas if the Government fulfilled their pledge in its spirit and its letter, and introduced a non-contentious Bill, it would not be blocked on that side of the House, and he should imagine by nobody on the other side of the House, since hon. Gentlemen were under the control of the Leaders on the front Ministerial Bench. This was a matter, in his opinion, which was capable of a plain answer; would the Bill in question

be confined to the single point connected with the alteration of the term from five years to three years; or was it the intention of the Irish Government to take advantage of the promise made to him, to try and force down their throats matters foreign to the particular subject under discussion when the promise was made, matters which were repugnant to them, and which would necessarily compel them to prevent—if it was in their power—the passing of the Bill?

Mr. HEALY said, it was to be regretted that the Government had not put at once a stop to this discussion. His hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had stated a matter which involved the public faith, not only of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker), but of the Prime Minister. Surely such a matter was not to be tampered with lightly. It would be in the recollection of every Member of the Committee that when, at 6 o'clock on a Saturday Sitting last August, it was necessary for the Government to make a statement with regard to Egyptian Finance, the Committee were discussing the Irish Constabulary Vote, and the Irish Members agreed to allow Progress to be reported at that hour—because everybody in the House and in the country was anxious to know what was the result of the Conference of the European Powers which had just concluded its labours. He and his hon. Friends agreed to allow Progress to be reported on the distinct understanding that the Vote would be brought up on Report before 11 o'clock at night. An arrangement, however, was come to between the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork, who was always extremely anxious to prevent anything like discussion if matters could be arranged without it, and the Government, the latter agreeing that they would bring in a Bill to reduce the term from five years to three years. That was a square arrangement, and thoroughly understood by every Member of the House and by the Government. It was understood that the Bill should be brought in at the earliest possible moment, and that it should be confined to two points. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), and the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Dublin County (Colonel King-Harman), both of whom were anxious that the quinquennial term should be reduced to a triennial term, approved of the arrangement—indeed, it was approved on all sides. What was now found? The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork asked whether the promise was to be fulfilled, and he could not get an answer. He (Mr. Healy) really did think that the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) ought to be able to give, on this point, the most straightforward answer. If the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister were in his place, he would not hesitate for a moment to give an answer. The noble Lord the Member for Flint (Lord Richard Grosvenor), who was now present, thoroughly understood what the arrangement was. Why did he not now get up and state what his impression was? He (Mr. Healy) grieved to have to say it, but his experience was that if he and his hon. Friends ever came to an understanding with a Member of the Irish Government, they were sure to find that the Gentleman they had been dealing with was overruled—in fact, he could do nothing, unless he had a Member of the English Government by his side. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Childers) would bear him out when he said that last year an agreement was come to in order to enable a statement to be made with regard to the Egyptian Conference; that the Irish Members allowed Progress to be reported; that they afterwards allowed the Vote to be taken; and that, subsequently, an arrangement was come to that, if they forewent the discussion on the Report of Supply, the Bill would be introduced to reduce the term from a quinquennial to a triennial one. Now, they asked if the Bill was to be introduced in a non-contentious form, and they could not get a straightforward answer. Was that the way to treat hon. Members? Unquestionably, it was understood that the Bill was to be inoffensive, and that all sides would agree to it. He could not say what the Government wished to put in the Bill; but it did look very evident that an agreement honourably made was now about to be broken by the Government. He appealed to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for

Ireland to save the time of the House by getting up and saying whether the agreement come to with the Prime Minister was to be kept.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that he was not personally aware what the agreement or understanding of last Session was; indeed, he did not know that an agreement had been arrived at. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) and his hon. Friends seemed to attach considerable importance to the understanding, especially to what they maintained was the fact, that the legislation was to be embodied in a Bill by itself. ["A consent Bill!"] A consent Bill! There was no such thing as a consent Bill. They never could tell what part of the Bill might give rise to dissent. But he would undertake, at all events, to look into what occurred, and see if any such understanding was expressed. Now they were asked to state what the nature of the Bill was that they contemplated bringing in. It was a most unusual thing to be asked to do that, when the Bill was to be brought in within a day or two. Hon. Members had only to wait until the Bill was introduced; then they would become acquainted with all its provisions. They had been told that it was impossible to get a straightforward answer, and that no bargain could be made by a Member of the Irish Government, unless there was a Member of the English Government by his side. He assured hon. Gentlemen that that was not the case, and he could also assure them that there was no intention of breaking any agreement which had been arrived at. It would, however, be most unusual for the Government to state what the provisions of a Bill which had not been introduced were.

MR. PARNELL said, he was very sorry he could not accept the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) as a satisfactory one. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that he did not know, not having been in Office at the time, what the nature of the promise of the Government was. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) did not know; but the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker), who was sitting by the right hon. Gentleman's side, did know. Would the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland get up, and state that he (Mr. Parnell) had or had not given a correct account of what took place? He (Mr. Parnell) had stated two things; first of all, that the Government agreed to take into consideration the fact as to whether there was this shortcoming regarding the number of the Free Force; and, secondly, if they found it was so, they would introduce not only a Bill, but a Supplementary Estimate, to remedy the grievance. Now, that was his first statement; and his second statement was that it was expressly stated at the time by the Solicitor General for Ireland that both the Bill and the Estimate were to be non-contentious. He did not ask—indeed, it would have been unfair to expect—the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to answer either of these questions, or to assent to these propositions; but it was not unfair to ask the Solicitor General for Ireland, who, at the time, was acting for the then Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Trevelyan), and who made the promise in question, who took part in the proceeding, and who, in fact, was the Irish Executive, to whom he (Mr. Parnell) and his hon. Friends had to look—it was not unfair to ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether the two statements he (Mr. Parnell) had made formed a true representation of the facts of the case; and whether, if they did, would the Bill be introduced in accordance with those facts? Now, this was a question for plain dealing, and for plain statement. He submitted that without going into the merits of the Bill, of which Notice had not been given, without departing from any of the customs which were usual in discussing Estimates, the Solicitor General for Ireland was bound to answer the question now put to him. The hon. and learned Gentleman was in a position to say whether his (Mr. Parnell's) account of the affair was correct or not, and he was also in a position to say whether he would carry out the pledges he made—carry them out in their spirit, and in their letter. The hon. and learned Gentleman might not consider himself a free agent in this matter; but he (Mr. Parnell) asserted that nobody was free to break his word, and that, however subordinate the position of the hon. and learned Gentleman

might be to a higher authority in Ireland, he ought not to allow himself to be placed in a position of refusing to carry out a distinct agreement—an agreement which he must know perfectly well was entered into. In dealing with Irish officials, he (Mr. Parnell) did not know on what they could depend, if they were to be treated in this way. He did not know what they were to depend upon, if they could not depend upon plain declarations, or upon plain assurances, made both in and out of the House, and in this case they had had both in abundance. There was no doubt whatever in the mind of the hon. and learned Gentleman at the time of the occurrence. Any doubt that had arisen since had arisen in consequence of the action of somebody else besides himself. He believed that if the hon. and learned Gentleman had been left to himself, he would, as an honourable Irishman, have repeated the intention of fulfilling that which he promised. The engagement and the understanding was a perfectly distinct one, and there could be no doubt whatever as to the merits of the case. He (Mr. Parnell) and his hon. Friends were strongly supported from the Conservative Benches. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel) supported them from the Front Opposition Bench; and that right hon. Gentleman was very much annoyed that, during his absence, they, in consequence of the promise given them by the Solicitor General for Ireland, allowed the Report of the Vote to be taken. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the County of Dublin (Colonel King-Harman) also supported them, and thought they were fools to trust to the Punic promise of the Government. He (Mr. Parnell) submitted that they ought not to be put off with the evasion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland. Either his (Mr. Parnell's) account of the transaction was a correct one, or it was incorrect. If it were incorrect, the hon. and learned Gentleman would be able to point out in what respect it was incorrect; and he could, if he would, say whether he intended to fulfil his pledge as to the introduction of the Bill.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, he would certainly carry out to the full, not only what was stated in his promise, but what was implied. He had not, however, heard the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) read from *Hansard* anything relating to the promised Bill being a non-contentious Bill. [Mr. PARNELL: Oh, but you made other statements.] That matter never entered into his mind. He (Mr. Walker) did not say it might not have been the understanding of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork; but the matter certainly never entered his (Mr. Walker's) mind, one way or the other, except as he stated—and his words were very faithfully and carefully reported in *Hansard*. If what the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork had said was implied from his words, he (Mr. Walker) would certainly not withdraw from his words. He would read over the report of the debate in *Hansard* again; and if he saw that the agreement, as stated by the hon. Gentleman, was either expressed or implied, he should certainly abide by it.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he was present on the occasion to which his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) referred; and he could say that nothing was more clearly understood than that a Bill would be brought in by the Government applicable to the particular case of the distribution of the Constabulary Force. Whether it was expressed or not, it was certainly understood that the Bill would be brought in for that purpose alone. In his opinion, if the Bill were to be brought in uniting that purpose with another purpose, there would be a deliberate breach of the engagement.

MR. SEXTON said, that this conversation illustrated the extreme difficulty he and his hon. Friends found in securing attention to the most reasonable claims they made. If they asked why a claim for compensation was made in the Estimates, they were told that an official had run away; if they asked why the Government resisted the claim of a surgeon for attending upon a landlord, they were told that the official concerned in the matter was dead; if they claimed the performance of a promise made last year, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) rose at the Table, and, beginning by a statement that he was not in Office, and therefore not responsible at the time the engagement was

made, proceeded to endeavour a second time to put them off on this question by a perfectly hollow plea. That right hon. Gentleman told them to wait until the Bill was brought in, and then they would be able to ascertain its provisions. This was the second time these tactics had been adopted on this question. They were told last Session that if they would allow the Vote to be passed they would see this would happen—that a Bill would be brought in to meet their views. Hon. Gentlemen knew how eager the Government were at the fag-end of the Session to get through their Business, and how ready they were to make promises. What had happened in this case illustrated how easily the Government forgot any consideration they received at the hands of hon. Members. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had asked for plain dealing in this matter, and he certainly had made a very plain and unmistakable statement. The Government certainly undertook to bring in a Bill and a Supplementary Estimate for the distribution of the Police Free Force. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland said there was no such thing as a consent Bill, and an abstract proposition of that kind had no real bearing on the case. But the matter was non-contentious. The question was debated by all Parties, and the proposition to settle it by the introduction of the Bill received unanimous assent. He considered the remarks of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) amounted to an evasion of the question. It was no use for the hon. and learned Gentleman to say he would carry out his pledge both implied and expressed. He (Mr. Sexton) maintained that the pledge had already been broken. The Session had proceeded some length of time, and the Government were bound to introduce it at the outset. They had not made any attempt to lay the Bill before the House. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland could not persuade the Committee he was keeping his pledge if he brought in a Bill which was not limited to matter which was undeniably non-contentious. If he brought in a Bill not limited to the subject specified, he would be grossly violating the spirit of the engagement into which he entered. He (Mr. Sexton) felt bound to point the moral of this proceeding. It was quite evident that there would be great economy of public time if hon. Members could arrive at understandings such as that which his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork thought he arrived at; but he (Mr. Sexton) said—and he said it calmly, and with a desire to impress the reasonableness of what he said on hon. Members—if he and his hon. Friends found that undertakings and understandings solemnly and publicly concluded were broken, and that the violation was attempted to be justified by such flimsy pretexts as had just been expressed from the Table, no such undertakings would be concluded in future; and whenever debate was raised they would be obliged to pursue it until they got an immediate settlement of the subject. If promises made at the Table especially by Members of the Irish Government were broken, no such promises would have any effect on Members; and so, in consequence, the debates in the House would be undoubtedly prolonged far beyond what was really wished and desired.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), who had spoken with great severity of the conduct of the Irish Government in this case, had made the charge that Members of that Government had entered into an engagement in which they expressly stipulated that they would introduce a Bill of a non-contentious character; and he added that that was an engagement not only implied but expressed. The hon. Gentleman referred to *Hansard* as to the expressions of that pledge and read a passage from the volume. Now, if the assertion of the hon. Gentleman be made good there was no need of further discussion; but he (Sir William Harcourt) listened with the greatest care to the passage which was read from *Hansard*, and he could not find anything in it to justify the assertion of the hon. Gentleman. Now, a promise to bring in a Bill was not a promise with reference to a particular matter; it was not a promise to make the Bill refer exclusively to a particular point and no other. He had often given undertakings in that House to legislate upon a particular matter; but he never had understood, unless there was some

stipulation to that effect, that the Bill must necessarily refer to the one point, and to the one point only. If that was intended by either party, where was the trace of it? It was most unreasonable, in his opinion, to expect that if an undertaking were given to legislate upon a particular point, the Bill introduced should refer only to that point. Such an undertaking would not be a usual undertaking to give. If the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork would show where what he maintained was expressed, and how it was expressed, there would be no need for the debate. If it were expressed in terms there could not be any further room for discussion; but if it was not expressed in terms, then he (Sir William Harcourt) considered it was perfectly unreasonable to expect that the Bill should relate to the one subject. Such a proposition did not commend itself to common sense or to experience. Unless the hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Cork showed more than he had shown already, there was no foundation whatever for the charge he had made—that the Government were departing, or desired to depart, from their pledge. He (Sir William Harcourt) was a complete stranger to the matter up to this evening; and, from what he had heard, he could not admit that the charge made against the Government had been proved.

Mr. PARNELL said, his statement was quite distinct—namely, that both in the House and outside the House it was understood and expressed that the Bill should be a non-contentious Bill, and that the Supplementary Estimate should be a non-contentious Estimate. [Sir William Harcourt: Where is it expressed?] He would tell the right hon. Gentleman where it was expressed. It was expressed by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker), in a conversation with him (Mr. Parnell), after the hon. and learned Gentleman had received Lord Spencer's consent to the introduction of the Bill for this specific purpose. The hon. and learned Gentleman told him (Mr. Parnell), after he had received Lord Spencer's consent, that the Bill would be a non-contentious Bill; that it must be a non-contentious Bill both upon his (Mr. Parnell's) side and on the side of the Government. The hon. and learned Gentleman also said that the Estimate must be non-contentious, because it would be utterly impossible to pass it under any other circumstances. Well, that was the distinct statement made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland. He (Mr. Parnell) was very sorry to be obliged to refer to a conversation which took place outside the House; but as the Home Secretary had asked him to say where it was expressed he felt obliged to answer him. Now, let him show also from the proceedings in the House how clearly must have been the understanding that the Bill was to be a non-contentious Bill. The Solicitor General for Ireland said—

"If it were found to be the fact that the free force was not fully distributed the matter could only be remedied by legislation, because there was no means of remedying it except at the quinquennial redistribution, which would not take place before 1887. If the grievance existed legislation would be introduced for the purpose, and he would be prepared to introduce a provision making the redistribution triennial instead of quinquennial, as at present."—(3 *Hansard*, [292], 232-3.)

Then he (Mr. Parnell) said—

"He thought the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Walker) was very satisfactory, and he and his Colleagues felt very much indebted to him for his announcement. In the event of its being distinctly ascertained that the free force was not fully distributed at the last quinquennial period of redistribution, he understood the hon. and learned Gentleman to undertake to empower the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, by legislation, to distribute the free force at the first opportunity, and also to make this redistribution retrospective."—(*Ibid*, 233.)

Then the hon. Gentleman the Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), who was at that time Secretary to the Treasury, said—

"He did not understand his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) to make any statement with regard to the cost of the year."—(*Ibid.*)

The whole of his (Mr. Parnell's) statement with regard to the immediate introduction and passage of the Bill was accepted by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland. He asked the Committee, as reasonable men, whether the introduction of the Bill involving not alone this point with regard to the alteration of the term of redistribution of the Free Force, but involving a number of other points which had cropped up since then, and

which neither the Irish Executive nor the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) had in their minds at the time, could be regarded as a satisfactory promise then made? The hon. Member for Liskeard knew something about the matter. The hon. Gentleman was aware that the point under consideration was limited, and that the promise which was made was a practical one; and he must see that the statement which had been made was not a satisfactory answer, and not a fulfilment of the pledge which had been given. It was not a fulfilment of the pledge to bring forward this other Bill, which had since entered into the mind of the Irish Executive, dealing with a vast number of other points, besides that which it had originally been intended to deal with. Such a Bill could not be passed immediately; but he had no doubt that a measure dealing simply with the redistribution of the police might easily be passed into law. It could have been passed any week, because it would not have been opposed by anyone; and they all knew that a measure involving other matters affecting the Constabulary in Ireland would be bitterly opposed by the majority of the Irish Members, and that it would not be possible for the Irish Executive to pass it. Probably no Bill would be passed this year. Was that a fulfilment of the pledge of the Government? The Irish taxpayers were, meanwhile, paying this amount of £30,000 a-year. Was that just? The hon. Gentleman lately Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) had, when an appeal had been made to him during the time he was in Office, refused to make a reduction, and the injustice accordingly had to go on. Was that injustice to continue? It appeared to him (Mr. Parnell) that the Bill which was to be proposed, and which was to contain other matters, would not pass for many months—perhaps not until the next Parliament; this unjust imposition, therefore, was to go on all this time. Again, he asked, was that the fulfilment of the pledge given to him by the Government—that they were to wait for the Bill, perhaps, until August, perhaps until January or February next, after the new Parliament had assembled? Perhaps the Government might make this measure a clause of the Crimes Act, and call that a fulfilment of their pledge. The hon. and learned Gentleman who had made the pledge knew perfectly well what he meant at the time. If some higher power than himself compelled the hon. and learned Gentleman to break his word, it was not his (Mr. Parnell's) fault, but the fault of the system. He should certainly do his best to prevent the Government getting this Vote, until he had some more satisfactory assurance as to their intention to redeem their pledge, and to deal—at any rate in a small degree—honourably with the Irish Members.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Parnell) had asked—which he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) thought he had no right to do—what was to be imported into this Bill—what other points beyond the redistribution of the police were to be dealt with. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) did not know by what right the hon. Member asked that. He did not suppose that anything of the sort was even contemplated. He had said that he would ascertain what the understanding was which was arrived at at the end of last Session, and would see that nothing was done in the Bill, in the way of introducing new matter, which would conflict with the understanding entered into. He did not know, personally, what the understanding was; but his hon. and learned Friend near him (Mr. Walker) had given his recollection of it. [“No, no!”] Yes, he had given his recollection in general terms. [Mr. Sexton: Only from *Hansard*.] His hon. and learned Friend had said more than that. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) did not know what the recollection of the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney) was upon the subject, as he had never spoken to him about it; but he was ready to abide by that hon. Gentleman's recollection. Whatever the understanding was, he could assure hon. Members opposite that nothing had been done which constituted any breach of the pledge which had been given last Session.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Walker) said, the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) stated that he was under the impression—indeed, he had gone so far as to say that he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) had stated—that the Bill which would be introduced would be of a non-

contentious character. Well, that was not at all his (Mr. Walker's) recollection of the understanding; such a thing had never occurred to his mind at all. It had never occurred to him that the pledge given was that a non-contentious, or a consent, Bill should be introduced. So anxious was he to be correct in the statement he made that, when he had addressed the House making the observations the hon. Member had referred to, he had written them out, in order that they might contain everything that he could promise, and the paragraph which was in *Hansard's* report was from the written statement he had prepared.

MR. E. D. GRAY said, the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Walker) reminded him very much of the case of Mr. Hamilton, which they were discussing a little time ago. He was not able to contradict what the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) declared to be the fact, and could only give his impression of what he believed to have been the statement he himself had made to that hon. Member.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): I did not make any such statement myself.

MR. PARNELL: You certainly did.

MR. E. D. GRAY said, he would leave it to the experience of hon. Members to decide upon the value of a statement forced from a person in this way. The understanding was clear and distinct, and it was that the Bill should be acceptable to the Irish Members, and one which there would be no difficulty in passing; and to tell them that a Bill was to be introduced containing a variety of new matter beyond the principle which had been agreed upon, and which was to be of a non-contentious character, could not be called a fulfilment of the undertaking entered into by the Government. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland knew very well that a Bill, such as was now indicated, containing other matter than the one non-contentious principle, would have very little chance of passing; and for him to stand up in that House—which was supposed to be the first Assembly of Gentlemen in Europe—and to declare that what was now proposed was keeping faith with the Irish Members, was one of the most extraordinary proceedings he (Mr. Gray) had ever witnessed in the House.

MR. HEALY said, the Committee would not have failed to notice, and would remember what Member of the Treasury Bench it was, who had imparted into the discussion its present tone. The Committee were going on with the discussion in a cool and collected style, until the Home Secretary threw his robustness into the argument. When the Irish Members gave the facts of the understanding entered into between them and the Government, and mentioned the pledge which had been given by the Government, that right hon. Gentleman asked—"Where are the traces of it?" Where are the traces?—the regular Old Bailey business. In future they would have to come down to that level. "Put it in a bond! Let's have it signed, sealed, and delivered!" That was the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman, who, if his promise were questioned at all by the "Irish scum," would answer contemptuously—"My word is my bond." But now it was—"Where are the traces?" [*Laughter.*] In future, when the right hon. Gentleman made a promise, the Irish Members would ask him—"Where are the traces?" and perhaps the smile upon his face would not then be so pleasant as that which he was now endeavouring to assume. No traces!—there was no discussion. Why was there no discussion? Why, because the Prime Minister told them that if they gave up the matter, and allowed Progress to be reported, the Report of the Constabulary Vote would not be taken after half-past 11 at night. But that pledge was not kept. It was not kept, because the Irish Members had condoned it. Was that phrase sufficiently Old Bailey-like for the right hon. Gentleman? One would think, indeed, that that House was a Crimes Act Court, where they were putting prisoners under the torture, judging from the way in which the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had been conducting himself. Where are the traces? Why, judging from what he (Mr. Healy) knew to have taken place in Irish Courts of Justice within a comparatively recent period, he could confidently assert that on much less distinct evidence than that of the existence of the understanding referred to by the hon. Member for the City of Cork men had been hanged. "Is it expressed in terms?" It was expressed

in terms; but British honour had come to this—that nothing could be expressed in terms unless it appeared in *Hansard*—unless it was set down in black and white. He (Mr. Healy) had noticed a most unusual act—a most unusual proceeding—take place on the Treasury Bench. After the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had spoken, another Member of the Government, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker), had immediately followed him, a circumstance which, in connection with Irish matters in that House, did not happen once in six months; and it happened in consequence of the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary having moved up to the Solicitor General for Ireland. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland had declared that what appeared in *Hansard* were not the words he had uttered, but the words which he had subsequently written down for the official record.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (MR. WALKER): I desire to say——

MR. HEALY: Allow me; you can explain afterwards.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Let him go on!

MR. HEALY: "Let him go on!" Perhaps he would a little longer than some people might care about before they got this thing through. As he had stated, they found a most unusual thing occur on the Treasury Bench. After the Chief Secretary for Ireland had sat down, the Home Secretary had moved up to the Solicitor General for Ireland, and the Solicitor General for Ireland had thereupon done what was most unusual in debate in that House, unless an incident had occurred upon which it was necessary to say something while one Member of the Government had been speaking—that was to say, the hon. and learned Gentleman had got up to supplement the statement of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, evidently at the command of the Home Secretary. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland thereupon told them that what had appeared in *Hansard* was not what he had said, but what he had written, and put into it. ["No, no!"] Well, he (Mr. Healy) had understood the hon. and learned Gentleman to say so. He had understood him to say that he had written down the terms of the arrangement entered into with his hon. Friend (Mr. Parnell). On two occasions the Irish Members had made a distinct concession to the Government, when these concessions were of extreme value. The concession made by the Irish Members on one occasion—namely, upon a Saturday, when they had allowed the Egyptian Agreement to be considered, in order that City gentlemen might know what was being done in Egyptian per Cents, was of very special value to the Government. Irish Members allowed the Vote under discussion at the time to be taken at 5 o'clock on the Saturday afternoon, much to the chagrin of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel), who said he wanted to discuss the matter. Why had the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Huntingdon found fault with them? Why, because the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had pointed out that, during the Conservative Administration, the cost of the police in Ireland had been many thousands lower than during the Liberal Administration; and the noble Lord's point had struck the right hon. Baronet so forcibly, that he had spoken upon the matter, and intended to return to the charge on the Report stage. When the Report stage came on, however, he found that the Irish Party had allowed the Vote in Supply to be taken at a late hour, in the face of a distinct promise which had been given. The consequence was that the right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon put a Question in the House. He (Mr. Healy) had asked some of his hon. Friends to look into *Hansard* to see whether there were "any traces" of that. So annoyed was the right hon. Baronet that he had put a Question to the Prime Minister on the subject. And this was all the Irish Members got for entering into an agreement with the Government in the matter. [*Cries of* "Shame!"] That Party opposite were a great Government, and the Irish Members were only a small Party. The English were 30,000,000 of men; the Irish only 5,000,000; but the Irish Representatives, however great the disparity of strength, would do their best to obtain in this matter

what was admitted to be justice. The Government knew that if they put the provision they were discussing in the Crimes Act Bill, or that if any arrangements of an obnoxious character were made, the measure would be on the Table, and would be blocked by the Irish Members themselves, or by others. The Government admitted that the Irish people had a grievance in this matter of police, and had given the Irish Members a pledge with regard to it; but the Irish Members were now met by the question —"Where are the traces?" That was the spirit in which the Government treated the Irish Members. They admitted the injustice, but said that unless they could show that the promise was in black and white the injustice should not be properly remedied. So long as he (Mr. Healy) remained in the House he should never forget this. They were told to trust to the good faith and generous spirit of English Gentlemen. Fortunately, as a rule, the Irish Members did not act on that plan; but when, for once, they were soft enough to do so, they were met by the Old Bailey lawyer-like question, by gentlemen who were accustomed to treating with thieves in the dock—"Where are the traces?"

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had introduced an unfortunate method of dealing with these matters. The hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) had made a statement with regard to the arrangement that had been entered into, and what had the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary done? The right hon. Gentleman had been long enough acquainted with the hon. Member for the City of Cork to know that that hon. Member did not use words lightly; and when, therefore, he had said that the Government had promised to bring in a non-contentious Bill, the right hon. Gentleman should have known that he was not speaking without book.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that all he stated was with regard to what the hon. Member for the City of Cork had said in the House. The hon. Member had never for a moment in his speech suggested that it was agreed that a non-contentious Bill was to be brought in, and he (Sir William Harcourt) believed the matter to be entirely new. He believed the hon. Member's meaning, in the speech he was referring to, did not embrace any reference to an understanding that a non-contentious Bill should be brought in.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that the right hon. Gentleman showed himself to have been a very inattentive listener to the speech of the hon. Member for the City of Cork. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had heard the hon. Member say that the understanding was arrived at inside the House and outside the House. There was no one in that House, or in the country, acquainted with the hon. Member for the City of Cork, who did not know that nobody was less desirous of violating, in the smallest or remotest degree, anything like an honourable understanding than he was. When the hon. Member had referred to an understanding outside the House, the right hon. Gentleman might have saved him the necessity of making any further references. But the right hon. Gentleman had proceeded to taunt his hon. Friend. Looking at the general unwillingness of the Government to have it believed that at any time they entered into understandings with the Irish Members, from the fact of the hon. Member for the City of Cork having mentioned "outside the House," it might have been assumed that the right hon. Gentleman and the Committee generally would have allowed the matter to pass without going further. But the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary had absolutely taunted his hon. Friend into making explanations. The hon. Member for the City of Cork came forward with this explanation—that the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) had stated in the Library that a Bill of a non-contentious character should be brought in. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) put it to the Committee whether, as a matter of mere probability, apart from the statement of the hon. Member for the City of Cork, the understanding must not have been for the introduction of a non-contentious Bill confined to a single question? The sum in dispute was something like £30,000 a-year, according to the contention of the Irish Members, a great part of which was admitted by Her Majesty's Government, the Irish people were paying £30,000 a-year more than they should pay for police. That was not questioned by the Treasury Bench. Surely, then, the effort

of the Irish Members would be to get their constituents relieved from that burden at the earliest possible moment. It was clear that their course must have been to have prevented the Irish people from being charged with this £30,000 a-year one moment longer than it would take to legislate for the removal of the evil. So far did the Irish Members go that they asked for the measure which was to be brought in to be made retrospective; but it was refused. Surely their effort must have been to have got the burden removed on the 1st of January this year, or as near that date as possible. Was it not as clear as day that that must have been the object the Irish Members had in view? Well, if they wished to get it removed on the first opportunity, it must have been by a Bill brought in as soon as possible; and the only Bill they could have got passed into law with rapidity must have been one of a non-contentious character. His hon. and learned Friend the Member for Monaghan (Mr. Healy) had given a crushing answer to the statement of the Home Secretary, who had asked—"Where are the traces?" What the hon. Member for the City of Cork had been alluding to had been the words of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, and what the Home Secretary had forgotten was exactly what he should have remembered—namely, all the surrounding circumstances. The "traces" were, as had been pointed out, that the Irish Members, who had been giving a most obstinate and most prolonged opposition to the Constabulary Vote, at once ceased their opposition upon the Solicitor General for Ireland making his statement. The Constabulary Vote was one which Irish Members always contested severely and protractedly in that House; and would they have abstained from further opposition to the Vote if they had not thought that they had obtained a valuable consideration from the Government? The attitude of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel) had been mentioned. That right hon. Baronet had joined the Irish Members in their opposition to the Constabulary Vote. The opposition to the Vote was growing in the House. It was not confined to the Irish Members. The noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill) had also joined in the denunciation of the swollen Estimates for the police. As he (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had said, the right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon had joined them also; so that, having obtained this support on the first occasion the Vote came before them, the Irish Members had every reason to believe that if on the second occasion—that was to say, on the Report stage—they had again attacked it, they would have been able to do so in much greater strength. The Irish Members, however, believing that they had obtained a valuable consideration from the Government, had, so to speak, abandoned their allies. The right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon, on the next day, August 8, said in the House—

"It will be in the recollection of the House that, when the Constabulary Vote was taken, the Prime Minister gave a distinct pledge that the Report of it would not be taken after a certain hour—half-past 11. Now, my noble Friend (Lord Randolph Churchill) and myself stayed here until half-past 12 o'clock last night, intending, as English Members, to take part in this Irish debate, and, understanding that it would not be taken, we went away. My noble Friend and myself were deprived of an opportunity of discussing the matter, because, as I am informed, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland told the Committee that he had made some arrangements with the Irish Members, and so the Report on the Vote came on. But, as I say, my noble Friend and myself, after the distinct utterance of the Prime Minister that it would not be taken after half-past 11——

"Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!

"Sir ROBERT PEEL: The Prime Minister distinctly stated so.

"Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!

"Sir ROBERT PEEL: Well, I am in the recollection of the House, and I say the Prime Minister distinctly stated that the Report of the Vote would not be taken after half-past 11 o'clock; but I see this morning that it was taken."—(3 *Hansard*, [292] 276-7.)

The right hon. Baronet, having come down to the House to support the Irish Members, no doubt considered himself left in the lurch by them. Did anyone in his senses imagine that the arrangement entered into between the Irish Members and the Government was an arrangement to be interpreted in the light of events that occurred subsequent to that arrangement? So far as the Irish Members could understand, partly from what was said by occupants of the Treasury Bench, and partly from their silence, what the Government meant now to do

was to mix a number of things together in the Bill they were going to introduce, owing to circumstances some of them subsequent to the arrangement for which the Government had got a valuable consideration. It was monstrous that the whole thing should have to be fought over again after the Government had given a pledge.

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, that the hon. Member (Mr. Parnell) had proved from *Hansard* that the arrangement was that the Government should, as soon as possible, legislate on the matter. That they all admitted, and they had no desire to recede from their promise, and he could not understand why this discussion should be now continued. A short time ago, in addressing the Committee, he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) said that if the understanding was as stated by the hon. Member for the City of Cork, there would be no desire on the part of the Government to introduce controversial matter into the measure. Was not that enough? Hon. Members opposite, undoubtedly, on that occasion made a concession to the Government; and they seemed to be under the impression that Government promised that this question should be dealt with in a non-contentious way. His hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) was under a different impression. Still, he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) would go this length—as hon. Members had a strong conviction that the Government made the promise he would act on that supposition, although it was not the supposition he and his hon. and learned Friend had been proceeding upon.

MR. HEALY said, that there was one sentence in the speech of the right hon. Baronet the Member for Huntingdon (Sir Robert Peel) which the hon. Member for Galway had not quoted. It was the passage in which the right hon. Baronet said—

"If the Home Secretary were here, I would ask him what was the meaning of this, as he would call it, 'dirty trick?'"

MR. PARNELL said, he was perfectly willing to accept the statement of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland as most conciliatory; but not more than they were entitled to have.

Vote *agreed to.*

CIVIL SERVICE EXCESSES.

5.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £8,045 5*s.* 7*d.* be granted to Her Majesty, to make good Excesses on certain Grants for Civil Services, for the year ended on the 31st day of March 1884, viz:—

	£	s.	d.
CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.			
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings	107	17	6
CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.			
Privy Council	81	10	5
Registrar General's Office, Scotland	3	4	3
CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.			
Constabulary, Ireland ..	7,780	8	5
CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.			
Superannuations	72	5	0
Total ..	£8,045	5	7"

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, these excesses included a charge for persons picketed in Ireland; and he should like to ask the Government where the Treasury got the right to distribute public money without the assent of Parliament? There were really two sums in excess of those voted in Committee of Supply. These services were not contemplated or provided for by the Committee of Supply. The items were not mentioned in the Paper; but if the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury would refer to the Constabulary Vote he would find that £80 had been so distributed. He moved the reduction of the Vote by £80.

Motion made, and Question,

"That a sum, not exceeding £7,065 5*s.* 7*d.* be granted to Her Majesty, to make good Excesses for certain Grants for Civil Services, for the year ended on the 31st day of March 1884,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

—put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

House adjourned at a quarter after Five o'clock in the morning.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 17*th March*, 1885.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee*—Water Companies (Regulation of Powers) (21).
Select Committee—Report—Infants * [No. 45].
Report—Infants * (14-46).
Withdrawn—Roman Catholic Disabilities (Advowsons, &c.) (18).

ROMAN CATHOLIC DISABILITIES (ADVOWSONS, &c.) BILL.

(*Viscount Barrington.*)

(NO. 18.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

VISCOUNT BARRINGTON, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was intended to remove a disability which had existed for a long time affecting Roman Catholics, and which was not removed by the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829, who were owners of advowsons of the Church of England, and had a right to make next presentations. In his humble judgment Roman Catholics suffered from a deprivation of right which was most unfair and unjust, and quite contrary to all those principles of liberty which were recognized in 1829. All other classes of Dissenters, and even Jews and Mahommedans, could present to livings, and Roman Catholics alone were excluded. To allow this distinction to remain any longer would be most invidious. The present system, which in the case of livings in the gift of Roman Catholics led to a chance election by members of the Universities, was particularly objectionable. The Bill provided that the person nominated by a Roman Catholic patron should be submitted to the Bishop for approval, and thus safeguarded the interests of the Church. If their Lordships would give a second reading to the Bill he would be prepared to propose Amendments in Committee which he hoped would be satisfactory. As to the Amendment on the Paper, it appeared to him that it was intended to defeat his very small measure by a side wind, as he was not aware that it was proposed to bring in any general measure which would deal with the subject of Church patronage. All that he asked for was that even-handed justice should be meted out to all Her Majesty's subjects alike, and with that view he begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª. —(*The Viscount Barrington.*)

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE, in moving an Amendment of which he had given Notice, said it was short, and though it repealed parts of many Bills, its objects were simple—namely, to enable Roman Catholics who might have the patronage of livings in the Church of England to present to them. The reasons the noble Viscount (Viscount Barrington) gave to induce their Lordships to assent to his proposition were equally simple. All Dissenters, except Roman Catholics, having this patronage were permitted to present; why, then, were Roman Catholics excluded? There were several reasons. First, the whole system of Church patronage in the Church of England was anomalous, scandalous, and objectionable in the highest degree, and had been acknowledged by their Lordships' House to require amendment. When the Acts were passed preventing Roman Catholics from presenting to livings, they had the right of presenting to a large number of livings; while other Dissenters had few, and other Dissenters were not excluded on the principle, *de minimis non curat Lex.* He knew that many Roman Catholics possessing the right to present to livings had sold their rights. It was open to every Roman Catholic to do so; so that, so far as the value of property, they were in exactly the same position to realize as any other subject of Her Majesty. He might say for himself that he had accepted the principle of giving the same rights to Roman Catholics as to other subjects of the Queen; but not because they were Roman Catholics to give them extraordinary and exceptional privileges. If the noble Viscount would propose a Bill excluding all persons not members of the Church of England from presenting, he (Lord Oranmore and Browne) should be glad to support him; but as two wrongs did not make a right, if this Bill passed the evils of Church patronage would be increased, not diminished. That Roman Catholics had not the power of presenting was said to be a

hardship. It was so, if it was a hardship for the Mahdi not to appoint officers in the British Army in Egypt. The Bill purported to remove Roman Catholic disabilities. Well, it seemed to him that the disability of Roman Catholics to appoint clergymen to livings in the English Church was a disability somewhat similar to that which the right rev. Bench of Bishops suffered from; for they could not attend the Councils of the Church of Rome, neither could the Pope bestow upon them dignities higher than any that the Crown could bestow on any of her subjects. The emptiness of the right rev. Bench might show how much they regretted these disabilities. But it seemed beyond dispute that Roman Catholics were, for many reasons, more objectionable as patrons of livings in England's Church than other Dissenters. The existence of the Church of England, the position of her clergymen, the possession of her vast possessions, began and continued on the ground that she repudiated the authority as well as the doctrines of the Church of Rome. In fact, the two Churches were hostile and antagonistic to one another. He had met some friends who disputed this. He need only refer them to the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church. They might sympathize with the sophistry of the Prime Minister, who discovered that we were not at war in Egypt—but any person with common sense would agree with his (Lord Oranmore and Browne's) statement. Let him a minute claim their Lordships' attention to the view taken of the relations between the two Churches by Cardinal Manning. In addressing the third Provincial (Romish) Council of Westminster, Cardinal Manning said—

"This nineteenth century will make a great epoch in the history of the Church. . . . It is good for us to be here in England. It is yours, right rev. Fathers, to subjugate and to subdue, to bend and to break the will of an Imperial race, the will which, as the will of Rome of old, rules our nations and people, invincible and inflexible. . . . You have a great commission to fulfil, and great is the prize for which you strive. Surely a soldier's eye and a soldier's heart would choose by intuition this field of England for the warfare of faith. None ampler or nobler could be found. . . . It is the head of Protestantism, the centre of its movements, and the stronghold of its powers. Weakened in England, it is paralyzed elsewhere, conquered in England, it is conquered throughout the world, once overthrown here, all is but a war of detail. All the roads of the whole world meet in one point; and this point reached, the whole world lies open to the Church's will. England is the key of the whole position of modern error."

He made no complaint of this statement by the head of the Roman Catholic Church. It was as manly, as straightforward, as true to his Church, as it was aggressive against the Church of England. Would the members of that Church assist him? Now, one of the points most insisted on by the right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Peterborough) and other speakers on the Patronage Bill, when it was before that House, was that patronage was a pious trust. How would a good and obedient Roman Catholic exercise that trust, but to subjugate, to subdue, and overthrow their Church? For what reason could a Roman Catholic desire to exercise this patronage, save to appoint a minister of his Church, having a dispensation to a living in the Church of England? It would be said that could not be; he must pledge himself to agreement with the Thirty-nine Articles. If that was the only difficulty, a dispensation would get over it; but it was not necessary, for there were many advowsons in the English Church called "donative," in which no induction by the Bishop and no declaration was necessary! Their Lordships would remember that, in the debate on the Patronage Bill in that House, the right rev. Prelate he had just referred to declared that the patronage, as exercised, made the Church of England stink in the nostrils of persons who, otherwise, would be within her fold. Would the passing of this Bill make it smell sweeter? The congregations were sick enough already at being bought and sold; but now they would appoint as spiritual guides for them those who were here in this land declaring a deadly crusade against all they valued as most holy and most dear. In his mind, there was no blot so great on the nobility and gentry of England as the way they had used their Church patronage, and their wealth and influence, to set the laws of the land at defiance. For more than 30 years, through patronage, they had done so, in the pulpit and through the Church schools—setting at defiance the honest convictions of the congregation, taking advantage of their poverty to oblige them either to have no churches or no

schools, or to attend at services distasteful and illegal, and their children to receive education in tenets of another and hostile faith. The Liberation Society were friends to the Church, compared to those who had pursued that course; and now, by this Bill, they would impose another and a heavier burden. He would only ask their Lordships one more question. First, let him ask Roman Catholics was there one of them who would consent to Protestants appointing their spiritual guides? He would ask members of the Church of England, who was he who would accept a pastor appointed by a Roman Catholic? If both sides answered that they would not, they must both join in throwing out this Bill. Again, one more question. Liberals and Conservatives feared losing the Roman Catholic vote. It was unduly large; but, mistake not, the new Franchise Bill would bring into action a still larger Protestant vote. Beware lest they lose that! Remember precedents. The Irish Church was now representative — no patrons—this was the work of Liberals. The Scotch Church was representative—rest assured ere long so would be the English. He asked them to reject the Bill and accept his Motion.

Amendment *moved*,

To leave out all the words after ("That") and insert ("this House deems it unnecessary to pass this Bill, awaiting a measure being introduced dealing with the whole matter of church patronage.")—(*The Lord Oranmore and Browne.*)

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said, he could not pretend to follow the noble Lord who had moved the Amendment in all his arguments; but he believed that the course which the Amendment recommended was the right one to follow now. The question of the disposition of patronage in the Church of England required to be dealt with and adjusted as a whole; and he hoped that with the assistance of noble Lords he would be able to introduce a Bill which would be acceptable to their Lordships, and have some chance of passing the other House of Parliament—a Bill which would deal with all the rights of patronage, and provide a better system in respect of Roman Catholic patronage. He strongly deprecated the raising of small parts of a large question and introducing little Amendments, instead of dealing with the question in a comprehensive spirit. There had been no attempt to show that there was any real grievance, or that any persons entertained a sense of injury. If the Bill should be passed, it would place Roman Catholics in a remarkable position. He could not understand a Roman Catholic desiring to present to a living in the Church of England. If he (the Archbishop of Canterbury) were put into a similar position, and had to nominate to preferments in the Roman Catholic Church, he should be only too thankful to relieve himself of the duty, and should probably delegate it to a body of intelligent Roman Catholic laymen, just as at present a Roman Catholic patron could, and often did, delegate his power to members of the Church of England. The noble Viscount told them he had brought in the Bill entirely *proprio motu*, and on his own authority; and he (the Archbishop of Canterbury) had not heard that Roman Catholic patrons desired the Bill; he therefore, saw no justification for it. He should entertain these objections to the Bill even if he were disposed to minimize the differences between the Church of England and that of Rome. But he was not by any means disposed to minimize those differences; they had left their mark on history, and were of a fundamental character. It was argued that the Bishops would have a check on the appointments, and though they would cheerfully discharge that responsibility if called upon to do so, yet it must be remembered that that responsibility stood greatly in need of definition. The Bill dealt with a large and historical matter; and he would ask the noble Viscount to withdraw his Bill and wait for the larger measure, which would deal with the question of Church patronage generally, and make more clear the responsibility of the Bishops. If the Bill were not withdrawn he must support the Amendment of the noble Lord.

THE EARL OF HARROWBY said, he did not like to oppose his noble Friend; but he was extremely unwilling that the vote he was about to give should be misunderstood. He should be the last man to say one word against the privileges exercised by the Roman Catholics; he should wish that they had every privilege the same as other subjects of Her Majesty. But he looked at the

subject from the point of view of the parishes of the Church of England, and not from the point of view of patronage. He thought it even possible that some of those belonging to the Roman Catholic Church would make a better choice of a minister than some Protestants would. But it was not a question between Roman Catholic and Protestant; it was a question of much wider scope. He would ask the House whether in any other Church in the world a state of things existed in which a Mahommedan or a Jew, or anybody else, would be able to appoint a minister to a Church of another faith? Was it possible that any other religious creed would allow a member of another faith to appoint ministers for them? Was that not in itself a monstrous and horrible thing? He would go further, and say it was not the intention of the English law. It was an accident of the time that gradually people had acquired landed property, and with it the presentation. But English legislation had not in any case committed itself to the course that persons who did not belong to the Church of England ought to appoint its ministers. And would it be tolerated that the Church of England should appoint ministers either of a tabernacle or a synagogue, or even a Roman Catholic place of worship? If they looked at it from that point of view it was really absurd. No doubt, abuses existed; but he was at a loss to understand why they were to take that very important step of legalizing what they would consider the abuse of appointing the ministers of one Church by the members of another faith. A clergyman of the Church of England had enormous powers in his hands. He could alter the whole conditions of the service. If there was a musical service he could sweep it away and substitute a simple one, or if there was a simple service he could abolish it and substitute a musical one. To a great extent, he was the educator of the young in the parish, and was supreme in many matters; and yet it was proposed to legalize the appointment of such an important person by a professor of another religion. It was impossible to rest such a change on the ground of fitness or justice. Then on what ground did it rest? Upon the rights of property? He must say they would be running foul of the whole current of modern public opinion if they stretched the rights of property to such an extent in regard to Church patronage. The whole question seemed to him to be one of the most delicate and difficult matters to deal with. But private patronage was a valuable inheritance, and one they ought to preserve. For himself, he believed the Church of England owed more to private patronage than to almost any other circumstances in her organization. But if they strained private right with regard to patronage too far, he was afraid they would soon make it so odious that the whole structure would break down. For his own part, he should be inclined to remedy present defects by giving power to the Bishop to refuse unsuitable persons. He trusted the noble Lord who had introduced the Bill with great thought and with a good object would consider the advice given him by the head of the English Church, who had just spoken, and would feel that it would be wise to withdraw it. Most of them would be extremely sorry to put themselves in a position of animosity to any projected reform in connection with Church patronage; but he, for one, could never consent to that proposal to strain the rights of property in a way which might be extremely prejudicial to the future reforms which they hoped to see carried out.

LORD FITZGERALD said, he should not have risen to speak in the debate had it not been for the remarks of the noble Lord, who had stated it as his opinion that the Bill would be availed of by Roman Catholics to undermine the Church of England.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, he did not think he had used the word "undermine;" if he had used it it was unintentionally.

LORD FITZGERALD said, he could only repudiate the suggestion altogether. It would be the bounden duty of the gentlemen in whom the power would be vested to obtain the best man possible, and inquire into his antecedents. He had no property in this country, therefore he could speak freely; but if he took his own case he should consider it his duty to make the most strict and rigid inquiry; and if he were in the diocese of the most rev. Prelate who had addressed the House so admirably he should think it his duty to take the advice of the Archbishop on the sub-

ject. Was it wiser and safer to distrust the Roman Catholics, who had the right of presentations, than to trust to their honour and their sense of duty? He thought it would be wiser to trust them.

A noble LORD: In this country?

LORD FITZGERALD: The noble Lord said, "In this country;" if he alluded to Ireland, such a thing did not exist in that country. They were to trust in this matter the Turk, Jew, and Atheist, but not the Papist. What could be more important to a man than to have a proper clergyman presiding over his district? Therefore, it would be his object, interest, and duty to select the best man possible. He did not support this Bill from any desire to undermine or destroy the Church of England; he would rather see her strong and vigorous, and he thought that this Bill would tend in that direction.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL said, that if a division took place upon this Bill he should vote without a moment's hesitation against the second reading. He wished to protest against the representations of the noble and learned Lord who had just spoken that the question before the House was whether Roman Catholic gentlemen in possession of the right of presentation would or would not act in an honourable way towards the Church of England. That was not the question. He had the utmost confidence in the sincerity of the noble and learned Lord, and believed that he would exercise patronage, if he had any, in the most conscientious way. Among his own Roman Catholic friends he knew many who had exercised their patronage in the most admirable manner; but that was not the question they had to consider. Much deeper questions were involved in this matter, for, as the noble Earl opposite had said, there was no subject connected with the Church of England more delicate than the right of private patronage. The great question to be considered with regard to patronage was whether it should be treated as a public trust or as a mere right of property. Historically it was considered a public trust, and most men exercised it in the spirit of a public trust. But in the course of centuries it had, unfortunately, come to be regarded as a mere right of property. He agreed that there was no more painful subject connected with the management and existing condition of the Church of England than the sale of advowsons and next presentations, for that system presented the right of patronage distinctly in the light of a mere right of property, and not of a public trust. If any change in the law were made at all patronage should be changed from its position of a mere right of property to a public trust. The change proposed by this Bill was in an opposite direction, for it treated patronage still more than at present as a mere right of property. They were going to place patronage in the hands of men who, whatever their feelings of personal honour, were not well-fitted trustees for the exercise of such a privilege. He agreed with the most rev. Prelate that no man could be placed in a more painful position than to have to exercise the right of patronage over the spiritual interests of those with whom he did not agree. The mere idea of an absolute right of patronage in the spiritual concerns of the people of a whole parish was to him a most odious conception. In his own country they had abolished patronage. At one time he had the honour and the misfortune to hold the patronage of no less than 30 parishes; but then he was a member of the Church in which he held them. In spite of that he always felt that it was a most difficult and onerous duty which he had to perform, and he was painfully conscious of many failures in exercising the right. In Scotland they had a system which gave the congregation a veto upon the appointment of a non-popular minister. The congregation appointed a committee, and were considered as having a veto upon any appointment. There was no such system in England; and if they made patronage more an absolute right of property than ever, they would drive a nail into the coffin of the Church of England. It might be said that it was impossible to deal with patronage, because there were so many opponents of the Church in "another place" who would fight against any measure, however just, if it would tend to strengthen the Church. But, in his opinion, there was no more urgent reform needed in the Church of England than some measure to modify the right of patronage and the sale of advowsons, and whenever that reform took place it must be in the direction of making it more a public

trust and less a matter of mere abstract property. He could conceive that under certain circumstances private patronage might be the best mode of appointing clergy—if it was in the hands of a gentleman owning large property in the parish, belonging to the Church, and taking an interest in the spiritual concern of the people of the parish. But there ought to be some check on the absolute power now exercised. The fact that advowsons were now sold and bought by persons who were not even members of the Church in which they appointed clergymen constituted a most painful state of things which would not long be tolerated. He opposed this Bill, not because he distrusted the personal honour of any person of the Roman Catholic faith, but because it was contrary to the public interest to alter the right of private patronage distinctly in a wrong direction.

EARL CAIRNS remarked that the issue raised by this Bill was part, and a small part only, of a very large question. They had been told by the most rev. Prelate that this whole question must before long come before Parliament for its consideration; and he had shown that it would be most unwise now, with the prospect of having to deal with the question as a whole, to come to any decision that night upon what was, after all, a very small fragment of a great question. There was another reason which made him unwilling to give a decision on that question at that time. This Bill presented the right of patronage in Church appointments in the most bald and naked form of a right of property. He trusted that his noble Friend would, by withdrawing the Bill, save the House the necessity of dividing upon it.

VISCOUNT BARRINGTON said, that after the discussion that had taken place, and especially after the assurance of the most rev. Prelate that in the proposed Bill dealing with Church Patronage the claims of the Roman Catholics would receive due consideration, he did not feel justified in putting their Lordships to the trouble of going to a division.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE wished, before the debate closed, to state that the noble and learned Lord Lord Fitzgerald was mistaken in supposing that he attributed dishonest motives to Roman Catholics. He had as much faith in the honour and integrity of Roman Catholics as of other Members of the House.

Amendment, Original Motion, and Bill (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

WATER COMPANIES (REGULATION OF POWERS) BILL.—(No. 21.)

(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that its object was to regulate the powers of the Water Companies—to improve the system, but not to take the powers entirely away. The present state of the law was that a householder was assessed on the annual value of the premises, and he was also required to pay in advance the quarter's water rate. If he failed to pay that amount in advance, the Company had the absolute right to cut off his water supply without further question. Such was the present state of the law; but since it had become so the Valuation Act and other Acts had been passed, by which this annual value became a shifting one, and one which was difficult to decide. The first point raised in this Bill was the proposal in the 4th clause that every Company should send in to every owner becoming liable a claim or demand note containing a statement of the particulars. The object of this proposal was perfectly simple. It was to insure the consumer receiving a full and complete statement of the demand made upon him and the particulars of that demand. In making a proposal of this kind, he was not proposing any course that was in any way exceptional. It was the course followed by a parish when it collected parish rates, as well as by the Crown in collecting taxes. It was also what was done in every case where a private bill was presented to a customer, the amount and the particulars of that amount being stated. But there were even stronger reasons to advance in favour of this proposal. It appeared to him most important, not only that the consumers should know the charges made upon them, but also that they should know, when changes were proposed to be made in their assess-

ment, what those changes were, and all the details of them. The present practice of most Companies was, when they were making a change in the assessment, to give no information whatsoever. He did not wish to go into details, but he would give one instance of the working of this practice. When he had raised a similar proposal before in that House, a friend of his, a Director of a Water Company, had said that he thought he was a little hard on the Companies, and that some of the cases he had quoted were hardly founded upon fact. He had replied that he would take his own case, and he applied to the Grand Junction Water Company for details of their charge. As soon as he had received the details, it appeared that the surveyor in his statement was charging him twice over. On asking for an explanation of this he had received the answer that they found he was perfectly correct, and that an error had been made; the excuse given being that the amount of work in the reassessment of the district had compelled them to employ new and untried hands. That was the result of the test case which he had taken up, and for which he could vouch. The Company had, afterwards, finding that they had been entirely wrong, sent him a new note altogether, and the result was that his premises were twice re-valued in six months. With regard to the right of the Companies to cut off the water supply, he was not proposing to take it away altogether; but by Clause 5 he proposed to make it necessary to obtain leave to do so from a magistrate or some Court of summary jurisdiction. It was necessary that some restriction should be placed upon the exercise of this power; because, in his opinion, it was one which was being improperly used for purposes which the Legislature had never contemplated when it gave the power. When the Waterworks Act, 1847, was passed the Legislature had never foreseen that this power would be used in cases of disputes. His great complaint was not so much that the Companies had exercised their power in enforcing payment of their bills, as that when disputes as to amount had arisen between them and consumers in many instances the Company had threatened the consumer with the entire removal of his water supply unless he consented to the demands which they made upon him. These instances could be multiplied to a large extent; but there was great difficulty in getting small consumers of water to come forward and give their names, as they were afraid of the Water Company. There was another danger which he would like to point out, which was that the Companies had used this power in some cases against tenants when they had disputes with the landlord. He would not have troubled their Lordships further if it had not been for a Paper which he had received that morning, and which he supposed had been circulated among their Lordships, bearing the names of Messrs. Baxter and Co., and other eminent firms of Parliamentary agents, and which he presumed was the statement of the case of the Water Companies in answer to this Bill. He would invite their Lordships' special attention to the contents of that Paper. It was there stated that this Bill would cause serious loss and inconvenience to the Companies, that it was un-called for, and that, if passed, it would be unjust. But this Bill only proposed that the Companies should render accounts in the ordinary form as a parish or the Crown did. With regard to the statement that the proposal had been brought in without any communication with the Water Companies, his experience of making an application to them was that they would offer opposition in every possible way, direct or indirect, in Parliament and out of Parliament. One of the Companies having appeared before Parliament for a Bill, he took the opportunity of endeavouring to introduce clauses into the Bill, and the Company objected to his proposal, saying that it was a mean and petty mode of legislating. Now that he had introduced the measure in a form in which even the Companies could not object to it, they said that if it was desired to alter the existing law the change should be undertaken by the Government of the day after careful inquiry, and that the matter should not be hastily dealt with by patchwork legislation. Under those circumstances, he asked their Lordships whether it would have been of much use for him to have appealed to the Water Companies if they were disposed to receive his proposals in that manner? The next allegation in the Paper to which he

The Earl of Camperdown

referred was that the restrictions now sought to be imposed had never before been suggested. But then Parliament had never supposed that that power would be used for settling disputes; it was a question of the payment of rates, and not of settling disputes. It was further alleged that the necessity of delivering demand notes and particulars to each consumer would involve serious trouble and inconvenience to the Companies. Of course it would; but it appeared never to have occurred to the Companies that the consumers had some rights in that matter, and that they incurred most serious inconvenience from the Companies giving them no information whatever. Then the Paper stated that Section 5 of the Bill would deprive the Companies of that which was practically, as respects a certain class of houses, their only mode of obtaining payment of the rates. That he took to be the real sting of the Bill, and to be the chief cause of the opposition of the Companies. They said that very seldom was the power of cutting off the water supply exercised, and never except after repeated applications for payment; that they issued over 50,000 notices of their intention to cut off the water unless the rates were paid, and that, with but few exceptions, the notice had the desired effect. The same plea might be urged in defence of the kourbash in Egypt—namely, that it was seldom actually used, the threat of its employment being sufficient to secure the payment of the taxes demanded, regardless of whether they were just or unjust. The Companies said they had 700,000 consumers, and they annually served those notices on nearly 8 per cent of that number, the notices not being very often pressed, because they generally had the desired effect. The kourbash in Egypt had the desired effect; but was it desirable to apply it? Now, he maintained that it was not desirable that when a dispute arose it should be settled summarily and at the arbitrary will of the Company. The Companies utterly ignored the fact that they had any duty towards the public; and it seemed that, in their opinion, the object of water supply legislation was simply to enable the Companies to extract from the consumers the amount of rates which they thought fit. He held that some legislation was absolutely necessary to protect the legitimate interests of water consumers, and therefore he asked their Lordships now to read that Bill a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

LORD BRAMWELL, in moving that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, said, his experience of law-making was very little; but he thought there never was a case brought before a Legislative Body asking for an Act to be passed with so little ground or foundation as the present one. That was a proposal to interfere with all the Water Companies in the Metropolis and throughout the country. He did not know whether the noble Earl was aware that he had left out those water suppliers who were Corporate Bodies, and not private Companies.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: Yes.

LORD BRAMWELL said, he supposed, then, that Corporations were to possess those powers which private Companies were to be required to give up. The Bill was an interference with all the Water Companies in England and Wales, an interference with millions of capital, and that without any case being made out before their Lordships, except that which the noble Earl had told them of his own particular knowledge and particular acquaintance. Was that reasonable? Was it right that the bargain that was made between the public and the Water Companies in the Acts which constituted them should be interfered with at all, or, at all events, without some better reason than any which the noble Earl had adduced? He knew that at that moment the Water Companies were not at all popular. They were considered proper objects of plunder and of ransom; and the reason for that, he supposed, was because they had been successful—at least, he knew of no other reason. There was a great outcry about the tyrannical conduct of the Companies; that was one of those cases in which he often thought it would be desirable if they could collect the voices of the silent. Everyone who supposed that he had a grievance against the Companies thought fit to make it heard, and cried—"Down with them;" but those who were contented, and had no complaint, held their tongues. Then, great reliance was placed on what was called the extortionate disposition

shown by the Companies; and reference was made to the decision of their Lordships' House in Mr. Dobbs's case. What happened in that case? The Companies thought they had a right to charge on the gross value; their Lordships' House thought that they had not, but that they must charge on the net value only. Were the Companies entirely to blame? Three of the most distinguished Judges of the Court of Appeal agreed with the Companies, and their Lordships' House had reversed their decision; and if three of the greatest Judges held that view, were those unfortunate Companies to be severely blamed for sharing it? The noble Earl had quoted his own experience in that matter. Let him mention his. He had obtained the particulars of the Water Company's demand against him; and, finding that they had undercharged him in regard to several items, being honest to the extent of a few shillings a-year, he had paid what was due to them. He had presented to their Lordships a Petition signed by the Chairmen of eight Metropolitan Water Companies, and also Petitions from the Water Companies throughout England. The Metropolitan Companies had 700,000 customers; and, as stated by the noble Earl, they gave 50,000 notices of the cutting-off of the water supply in the year, because until they did so they could not get paid; nor would the notice induce the payment; it was only when the workman came with his tools in his hand to cut off the water that the Company could get paid. And the result was that, for non-payment and otherwise, they cut off the water in only 1,400 instances. That was at the rate of but one case out of every 2,000 customers; and yet there was all that outcry against the Companies. The noble Earl talked of the kourbash, but the Companies did not use the kourbash; the threat of it was enough. If, by applying the mere threat of doing what you had a right to do, you induced people to do what they ought to do, it was a very good thing. What would be the consequence of taking away this convenient and summary remedy? The Company, before cutting off the water, would have to apply to a magistrate, who, if the customer still failed to pay, would make an order that the water should be cut off. Thus the Company would be put to considerable inconvenience, and the customer would incur heavy additional expense. As matters were now, if the Company exercised their power wrongly, they had to pay a penalty of £10. But, in fact, this penalty was never imposed. Why? Because the power was never wrongly exercised. The proposal of the noble Earl was most mischievous, both for the Company and the consumer, and was an unjust interference with rights conferred on the Company by the Legislature. It was not unreasonable that notice should be given by the Company of the amount and items of the claim. He thought it was given.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: They do not.

LORD BRAMWELL: Then one had only to write and ask. Then, with the proposed application to the magistrates, people would be sure to say they had had no notice of the claim. In "another place" a right hon. Friend of his said that he had strong views on property, and would have given Shylock his pound of flesh. Well, he had one strong view on property, that it should not be stolen. In the case of Shylock he would have decided with the fair Portia, on the ground that the Jew was attempting to infringe the law, which said, "Thou shalt not kill." It did not follow that, because you might not kill, you might steal. He asked their Lordships to discard any unworthy prejudices against Companies, which had their rights as well as individuals; and he hoped, therefore, that they would reject the Bill.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day six months.")—(*The Lord Bramwell.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, that when he saw the Notice of his noble and learned Friend (Lord Bramwell) he was full of curiosity to know what reasons his noble and learned Friend would assign for moving the rejection of the Bill. The principal clause of the Bill interfered with no rights or powers of the Companies. It only required that they should give information of the grounds of their demand to their consumers. The other clause, to some extent, no doubt, interfered with their power of cutting off the water. But the method of exercising that power was a matter for Committee, and not a ground for throwing out the Bill on the second

reading. The case for the principle of the Bill appeared to him to be a perfectly reasonable one. He was full of wonder when he heard the arguments of his noble and learned Friend, who went off into a speech on references made in "another place" to Shylock, and talked about stealing and the rights of property, and that on a Bill which contained nothing which could be construed as an attack on property. The Companies had obtained from Parliament the practical monopoly of the supply of one of the first necessaries of life on very favourable terms. The Metropolis and other large urban populations were wholly dependent on them. They supplied the water, not according to the amount used, but according to the valuation of the house supplied. The Bill did not take away any of their rights, or interfere with their property or the bargain which they had made with the State. All that the principal clause did was to require the Companies to let the consumer know what the valuation was, what real charges were, and upon what items of consumption they were based. In the only two cases they had heard of, in which particulars were detailed, it turned out that the Companies had made mistakes; and how could they know that no mistakes would be made again? The recent case of Dobbs, to which the noble and learned Lord referred, proved that those Companies had for many years been making their charges upon a false principle of valuation. As for the other clause, about which there might be some room for controversy, when they got into Committee, all that need now be said was, that when there were disputes concerning the liability, and when the consumer was not told the particulars of the charge made against him, using, or even the threat to use, the summary power of cutting off the water was a thing which perfectly justified some safeguard to protect the consumer against being so treated.

Lord TRURO said, he regarded the Bill, not as an interference with the Water Companies, but as a measure for the protection of the public. It was intended to secure the public against the excessive charges which the Companies, perhaps inadvertently, but still illegally and unjustly, attempted to enforce. Therefore, he thought their Lordships were deeply indebted to the noble Earl who introduced the Bill.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, he must confess he did not think that a case had been made out for rejecting the second reading of the Bill. The 4th clause was, in his judgment, a most reasonable one; but he hoped that, in agreeing to the second reading, he should not be supposed to assent to the 5th clause. That was a very stringent clause indeed, and if it were passed, he did not think the business of the Water Companies could be carried on. At present the remedy of cutting off the water could not be regarded as satisfactory, inasmuch as there were sanitary objections to it, and it often happened that, in consequence of a change of tenancy, it hit the wrong person. He did not think Parliament was bound to continue a system which had sanitary evils, and was injurious to the health of the population, merely on account of a previous bargain having been made with the Companies by Parliament. If, however, Parliament removed the remedy of cutting off, it ought to provide the Water Companies with some other remedy equally efficient. He asked the noble Earl who had charge of the Bill whether he could see any objection, when the Bill had passed the second reading, to refer it to a Select Committee, by whom this point might be considered?

The Earl of WEMYSS hoped that the Bill would be read a second time and referred to a Select Committee, so that the Committee might have an opportunity of stating their objections.

Lord BRAMWELL admitted that it was not unreasonable that people should be supplied with particulars of the charges made by the Companies; and he was quite content that the Bill should be read a second time, and referred to a Select Committee.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN said, he disclaimed all desire to do any injustice to the Water Companies, and expressed his willingness to refer the Bill to a Select Committee, on the understanding, however, that no counsel should be heard before it. He was perfectly able to state certain portions of the case himself on one side, and he knew that the Water Companies had among their Directors and officers persons perfectly able to bring the case of the Water Companies before the Committee.

Amendment (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

Bill read 2ª, and *referred* to a Select Committee.

CENTRAL ASIA—ENGLAND AND RUSSIA —THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether an engagement has been concluded between the British and Russian Governments agreeing that the Afghan and Russian outposts shall not advance beyond their present positions; what is the date of such an agreement, if it exists; and for what length of time will it remain valid; and whether the Afghan Government is a party to it? If I understand correctly what the Prime Minister is reported to have said last night, the right hon. Gentleman stated that the Afghan Government is not a party to the arrangement. The important point is, what is the length of time during which it will remain valid? If it remain permanently valid, England has abandoned the greater part of that for which she was contending; and I fancy that the language which has been used by the Government on former occasions will be at variance with such a result; but if it is not permanently valid, of course these remarks do not apply. There is another Question which I wish to ask, and it is, whether the agreement, or rather arrangement, as I believe I ought to call it, with the Russian Government is of an absolute and an unconditional character, or whether words have been introduced into it which will enable the Russian Government to depart from it if they should think proper to do so?

EARL GRANVILLE: I think that it will be better to read to your Lordships the telegram which has been received by the Government from Sir Edward Thornton in response to the inquiry which I made on Saturday. It is to this effect—

"St. Petersburg, March 16, 1885.

"The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs states that the Russian troops will not advance from the positions now occupied by them provided that the Afghan Forces do not advance or attack, or unless in the case of some extraordinary reason—such, for instance, as a disturbance in Penjdeh. He also states that the strictest orders have been sent to the Russian Commanders to avoid by every possible means a conflict or any incitement to a conflict, and that these orders will be repeated."

With regard to the further Questions put by the noble Marquess, I have to say that as to the date of the agreement the noble Marquess has quoted correctly what was said yesterday by Mr. Gladstone; but Mr. Gladstone's statement was founded upon several telegrams, the last of which was dated the 5th of March, and this telegram is dated yesterday. The noble Marquess asks an important Question as to the length of time during which the agreement will remain valid. I think that the noble Marquess asked that Question under a misconception. This arrangement has nothing whatever to do with the final settlement of this most important question; and I trust that both Governments will be able to bring that question to a satisfactory conclusion. This is merely an arrangement at the present moment to prevent what there is very great risk of—namely, that by an unauthorized action on the part of the Afghan or of the Russian Forces a collision might arise which would embitter the whole subject and make it much more difficult to deal with. With regard to the communication of the arrangement to the Ameer, our instructions to Sir Peter Lumsden are to exercise all his influence to prevent the Afghans from making an attack on the Russians, and Sir Peter Lumsden is in constant communication with the Ameer and his officers who are on the spot.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Do I understand the noble Earl to say that the engagement into which the country has entered involves the acquiescence for an indefinite time of the presence of the Russian troops in the places where they now are?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: As I understand the matter, the answer is certainly "No!" It is a temporary arrangement to prevent a collision between the Russian and Afghan troops, in order that the negotiations may proceed. The agreement, therefore, does not involve our acquiescence in the presence of the Russian troops in the places where they now are for an indefinite time.

LORD STRATHNAIRN was understood to ask whether, when the Afghan Boundary Commission resumed their duties, the Russian Forces would retire

towards Russia, and the Afghans towards Afghanistan, or whether both Forces would be drawn up in array opposite to each other?

Earl GRANVILLE: I think that it is only fair that I should tell the noble and gallant Lord that even if he gives Notice, I can only say that I do not think it desirable, during these difficult and delicate negotiations, to raise such a point by means of Questions.

EGYPT—ZEBEHR PASHA.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Viscount BURY: My Lords, the action of Her Majesty's Government has imported some degree of strangeness into the subject of the Question which I have put on the Paper relating to Zebehr Pasha. They have always insisted that they have no control in Egypt, and they have always acted on the advice of the Khedive; and we all knew the way that Zebehr has been arrested in Egypt and put on board a British ship and taken away, without the form of a trial, to some place unknown. This suggests the inquiry whether Her Majesty's Government have departed from the position they had previously assumed, and have taken charge in Egypt, or whether we are to understand that the Egyptian Government have requisitioned our troops, and made use of our ships, and deported Zebehr without a trial, such as was considered necessary in the case of Arabi Pasha. These are the circumstances; but without expressing any opinion whatever as to the propriety of the arrest and deportation of Zebehr Pasha, I will simply ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether martial law now prevails in Alexandria; and in virtue of what law or custom the deportation of Zebehr Pasha has taken place; and, whether Zebehr Pasha was arrested by order of the English or the Egyptian authorities?

Earl GRANVILLE: The noble Viscount has stated no opinion as to the acts which have been done, and therefore I will simply answer his Question. I do not see that any object would be gained by going into the question of Egyptian law, nor am I aware of any new policy having been adopted; but we certainly hold that as long as the English Army is in Egypt we are bound to take such steps as military necessities require. Having received information from Lord Wolseley on the subject of Zebehr Pasha, we have, on our own responsibility, after communication with the Khedive, and as a matter of military necessity, arrested Zebehr Pasha and his two sons, and made the seizure of their papers.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)

QUESTION.

Earl STANHOPE: I wish to ask the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is now in a position to make any statement to the House as to the settlement of the Egyptian financial arrangements?

Earl GRANVILLE: A Declaration embracing the whole agreement between the Powers has been signed this afternoon, and to-morrow Her Majesty's Government hope to sign the Financial Convention embraced in that Declaration.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: Will these Papers be laid upon the Table of the House with the Egyptian Papers?

Earl GRANVILLE: Yes; and as soon as possible.

House adjourned at a quarter before Seven o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 17th March, 1885.

MINUTES.] — Select Committees — Army (Commissariat and Transport Services), *appointed* and *nominated*; Town Parks (Ireland), Motion for Appointment [House counted out].

Public Bills — *Second Reading* — Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) * [86].

Committee — Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) (re-comm.) [49]—R.P. [*Fifth Night*].

QUESTIONS.

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS—PRICE OF BARLEY IN 1884.

Mr. HICKS asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether he can state the number of quarters of barley

returned in 1884 as having been sold at and below 32*s.* a quarter, and the number of quarters returned as having been sold at a price exceeding 32*s.* a quarter; and, whether he can state the lowest and the highest price per quarter of barley returned in 1884?

Mr. J. HOLMS (who replied) said: I regret to say that I am unable to give the information asked for by the hon. Member. It could only be obtained by the examination of several hundred thousand entries; and the Return would consequently be extremely troublesome and costly.

PRISONS BOARD (IRELAND).

Mr. HASTINGS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the constitution of the Irish Prisons Board has been altered by the reduction of one of the two paid members; and, whether it is intended to adopt the further proposal made by the Chairman of that Board to the Royal Commission on Irish Prisons, that his own powers should be increased and those of his colleague be diminished; and, if so, whether the instructions defining the respective powers of the Chairman and the other paid member will be laid before the House?

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked, whether any steps had been taken to give effect to any of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Irish Prisons; and, if so, what steps?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: One of the three paid members of the Prisons Board will retire on the 1st of April next, and his place will not be filled up. In lieu of it, a medical gentleman of experience, who has been for some years an Inspector under the Local Government Board, and who was previously Superintendent of the Criminal Lunatic Asylum at Dundrum, has been appointed to the newly-created office of Medical Officer to the Prisons Board. I presume some re-arrangement of the duties of the Board will necessarily follow upon this change; but there is no intention of increasing the powers of the Chairman. With regard to the Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I may say that steps are being taken to carry out a great many of the recommendations of the Commission—as many as could be carried out in such short notice. I will, however, answer more in detail and with greater accuracy if the right hon. Gentleman will give Notice of his Question.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I will put the Question on Monday week.

THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE—ADMISSION.

Mr. D. GRANT asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether a Despatch has been received by the Secretary of State for India from the Government of India, stating its views on the subject of the rules for admission to the Indian Civil Service, and of the Statutory Civil Service; and, if so, whether any reply to that Despatch has been sent by the Secretary of State; and, whether he will lay the Documents upon the Table of the House?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: There has been Correspondence between the Government of India and the Secretary of State on the subject referred to. It is not yet complete, and as the matter is still under consideration, it is not expedient that the documents should be laid on the Table of the House.

PRISONS (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1877—APPOINTMENT OF PRISON CHAPLAINS.

Mr. A. R. D. ELLIOT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the case that, by the Prisons (Scotland) Act, 1877, the appointment of prison chaplain is restricted to ministers and licentiates of the Established Church; and, if so, whether the Government will endeavour to pass a Bill abolishing this restriction?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): It is the case that by Section 10 of the Prisons (Scotland) Act, 1877, the appointment of prison chaplain is restricted to ministers and licentiates of the Established Church. The Bill was passed by the late Government. In the present state of Public Business, I am unable to hold out any prospect that a Bill dealing with the subject of prisons will be introduced this Session.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—TRIAL OF BEATTY AND MR. WILLIAMS AT ARMAGH ASSIZES.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether, on the trial of the Orangemen, Mitchell Beatty and M'Williams, at Armagh Assizes,

charged with having caused the death of Francis Hughes, a Catholic, the petty jury consisted of eleven Protestants and one Catholic, who from his name was believed by the Crown officials to be a Protestant; whether the jury found the accused guilty of "common assault;" whether Mr. Kilkelly, the Crown Solicitor, on the calling of the jury directed Mr. John O'Hare, of Catherine Street, Newry, an extensive building contractor, and by religion a Catholic, to stand aside; whether as Mr. O'Hare resides at a considerable distance from the scene of the occurrence, and as he had no connection with any of the parties, there was any exception to him except his religion; and, whether the Crown Solicitor of county Armagh has received instructions to exclude all Catholics from juries, or whether in doing so he is acting on his own responsibility; and, if the latter, is his conduct approved?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): The Crown Solicitor informs me that he does not know, and made no inquiries about the religious persuasion of any of the jurors in the case referred to in the Question. The jury found two of the accused guilty of a common assault. Mr. Kilkelly did direct Mr. O'Hare to stand aside, not on account of his religion, of which he had no knowledge, but because he was a licensed vintner. The Crown Solicitor has no such instructions as are referred to in the last paragraph. I may add he is himself a Roman Catholic.

MR. SEXTON (for Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR) asked Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the observations of Mr. Justice Johnson at Armagh Assizes on the 11th March, on the trial of Thomas Mitchell, Robert Beatty, and Henry M'Williams, charged with an assault on Francis Hughes which caused the death of said Francis Hughes, wherein the judge said that—

"If the grand jury had the evidence before them which had been given in that Court, it was a proper case for them to find a bill for manslaughter,"

which observations are reported in *The Belfast News Letter* of the 12th March; whether the grand jury found a bill for assault only; and, whether the grand jury had before them all the evidence for the prosecution given on the trial; and, if not, why was not the evidence produced?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): Mr. Justice Johnson made the observation referred to in the Question in answer to an argument of the prisoner's counsel. The grand jury found bills for grievous and common assault against the three accused. They had before them all the witnesses who were examined for the prosecution at the trial.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) ACT, 1883—AMENDMENT.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the intention of Government, before the Seats Bill comes into force, to introduce a Bill amending the Corrupt Practices Act, 1883, c. 51, with reference to groups of burghs in Scotland with varying numbers, populations, and distances from each other, providing in each burgh for (1) the candidate's personal expenses; (2) expenses of printing, advertising, publishing, and issuing and distributing circulars; (3) expenses of stationery, messages, postages, and telegrams; (4) expense of holding public meetings, and paying for committee rooms and other official expenses; and (5) for paying agents, sub-agents, and other necessary officials?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): When the Corrupt Practices Act was passed in the Session before last it was understood by the Government that the provisions applicable to groups of burghs met with the full assent of the burgh Representatives from Scotland. If I rightly apprehend the Question, the suggestion of the hon. Member is that the scale of expenditure fixed by the Act should be increased in no less than five directions. I have not as yet seen any evidence that the statutory scale is inadequate. I shall, however, be glad to confer with the hon. Member and other hon. Members representing groups of burghs on the subject.

LUNACY LAWS—CASE OF MR. CHARLES HILLMAN.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to the case of Mr. Charles Hillman, an alleged

lunatic, as reported in *The Times* of the 24th February; whether his attention has been called to the comments of Mr. Baron Huddleston, in delivering judgment, as follows:—

"Somebody—who it was we do not know, and everybody repudiates it—somebody sent the policeman and the other man with the blacksmith to the house to break open the door and take him away. Somebody had hired a carriage to take him and two men to go with him. Somebody had caused this to be done without any order, or any previous inquiry, or any personal examination: without any of the conditions prescribed by the statute to authorise the exercise of the jurisdiction, the applicant was put into a carriage and carried away to the asylum;"

and, whether he can state what action, if any, the Commissioners in Lunacy have taken in the matter. Will the complainant be left to his own resources to vindicate the Law, or will any steps be taken by the authorities to find out and punish the "somebody" to whom the learned Judge referred?

MR. H. H. FOWLER: The Secretary of State has called the attention of the Commissioners in Lunacy to this case; and they have reported to him that, after consideration, it appears to them that certain persons have been concerned in the unlawful taking and confinement, as an insane patient, of Mr. Charles Hillman; but they are of opinion, having before them the certificates of three medical men and the statement of the Medical Superintendent of the Lunatic Asylum for the county of Sussex, that Mr. Charles Hillman was in fact insane, and a proper person to be placed under care and treatment; and finding no evidence of malice or bad faith on the part of any of the persons referred to, they do not consider that a *primâ facie* case exists for the prosecution of such persons.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL.

SIR HERVEY BRUCE asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will inform the House whether the details of the Redistribution of Seats Bill are the same as those originally drafted and laid before those Members of the Government and of the Opposition who met last year to come to an arrangement on the Bill; and, if not, whether he will inform the House what changes have been made?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I am sorry I cannot give the information for which the hon. Baronet asks. I can only say that the draft scheme of the Government was greatly changed at the meetings which took place. I should not feel justified in stating the form in which the scheme was first placed before the conference of the Leaders.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—ACCELERATION OF THE MAILS BETWEEN BELFAST AND NEWTOWNARDS.

LORD ARTHUR HILL asked the Postmaster General, Whether he received a memorial from the Town Commissioners of Newtownards (county Down) in December 1884, complaining of the alteration in the postal arrangements in that town; whether he is aware that, under the old arrangement, letters were posted at Newtownards at 10.20 A.M. and delivered in Belfast soon after 12 o'clock, whereas, under the present altered arrangement, letters are posted at Newtownards at 1.30, and are not delivered in Belfast until after 4 P.M. thereby causing the greatest inconvenience and loss to the business community of Newtownards; and, whether he can see his way to remedy this just cause of complaint?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: The delivery in Belfast, which formerly commenced at 12.25 P.M., has, since the acceleration of the English Mail, *viâ* Dublin, commenced three-quarters of an hour earlier, and the train from Newtownards does not now arrive in time for the Newtownards letters to be included in the delivery as formerly. If the Railway Company could see their way to bring the train from Newtownards into Belfast earlier the difficulty would be met, and I will have further inquiry made on this point.

LAW AND POLICE—SUNDAY NEWSVENDORS.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will now instruct the Police to protect the public, more especially on Sunday mornings, from the great and increasing nuisance of itinerant newsvendors crying their goods in the streets?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am as sensible as my hon. Friend of the

nuisance to which his Question refers; but I am sorry to say the police have no power to put a stop to it.

Mr. SEXTON asked whether the right hon. Gentleman thought that it was a nuisance to the considerable section of the public who wished to purchase newspapers?

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that a large number of the working classes in London and other cities had no time except on Sundays to read newspapers?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: My answer had no reference to the Sunday part of the question; that is a matter of Sunday trading which it is very difficult to deal with. I understood the Question to refer generally to the extraordinary noise. I wish newsvendors would find means of conducting their business in a more tranquil, and I may say more accurate, manner.

CENTRAL ASIA—RUSSIAN RAILWAY.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he can state what point the Russian Railway from the Caspian towards Sarakhs has reached; and, whether Her Majesty's Government have information as to the movement of Russian forces from Samarcand towards Balkh?

Lord EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am not able to say to what exact point the railway is now in working order; but it is being pushed forward to Askabad. Her Majesty's Government have no information as to the movement of Russian troops towards Balkh.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Are we really to understand that at this crisis Her Majesty's Government have no accurate information with regard to the exact position to which the Russian railway is completed?

[No reply.]

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I will repeat this Question on Monday next.

Mr. ONSLOW gave Notice that he would ask whether Her Majesty's Government could not obtain some information upon this subject from the British Minister at Teheran?

NAVY—SERVICE UNDER STEAM.

Sir HARRY VERNEY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether there is a Standing Order from the Admiralty that, unless otherwise ordered, the ordinary service under steam is always to be performed at the most economical rate of steaming; and, whether he is of opinion that such order tends to the efficiency of the Navy as much as when, as formerly, the utmost rapidity consistent with perfect performance was the rule and practice of the Navy?

Mr. CAINE: Yes, Sir; there is an order that the ordinary service under steam is to be performed at the most economical rate of steaming. Large discretionary powers are given to the commanding officer. It is considered that this order tends to the efficiency of the Navy.

LAW AND POLICE—ARREST OF JAMES STEPHENS.

Mr. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY (for Mr. John O'Connor) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it was at the instance of the English Government that Mr. James Stephens has been placed under arrest by the French police authorities; whether Mr. Stephens's opinions are opposed to what is termed the "dynamite policy," and that he has repeatedly expressed and published his disapproval of such policy; whether the Government will at once intimate its desire to the French authorities to have Mr. Stephens set at liberty before permanent injury be done him; and, whether the recent arrest of Mr. James Stephens in Paris was due to any suggestions or promptings of Her Majesty's Government?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: The arrest referred to in this Question was not made at the instance, or, indeed, with the knowledge, of the English Government at all. As to the second part of the Question, as far as I know, the statement as to Stephens's opinions upon the use of dynamite is correct. As far as regards the last part of the Question, it is not a matter in which the Government would think themselves justified in interfering with the action of the French authorities; and from information which has reached me—not official information—Stephens is not in custody, nor is he in France, but was ordered to leave the territory, and I believe he has done so.

CENTRAL ASIA—ENGLAND AND RUSSIA—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the new agreement between the British and Russian Governments is still in force; whether any advance of the Russian troops has taken place since the date of that agreement; whether this agreement in any way recognises that Penjdeh, Ak-Rabat, and Zulfagar, are on debatable territory; and, whether he can now, consistently with the public interest, state that Her Majesty's Ministers intend to protect the absolute integrity of all Afghan territory, including these important positions, from Russian occupation and influence, in accordance with their own pledges and those of the Czar's Government?

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I believe that there has been no forward movement of Russian troops since the Russian Government agreed that no advance should take place. The agreement does not touch on the question of the ultimate possession of the places mentioned. As I informed the hon. Member yesterday, it would not be in the public interest to make any declaration of the nature suggested by him.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Prime Minister whether he could answer the last part of the Question?

MR. GLADSTONE: No.

MR. GIBSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Has the Government yet received any, and, if so, what reply to the telegram of Lord Granville, sent on Saturday to the Russian Government, asking for a confirmation of the Prime Minister's statement on Friday last?

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether an answer has been received from the Government of Russia on the subject of the agreement or arrangement, shadowed forth in the Despatch of the 5th of March, from Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, for the governance of the Russian and Afghan forces on the frontiers of Afghanistan; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government will lay upon the Table the precise terms of the agreement or arrangement?

MR. GLADSTONE: The two Questions are very nearly identical in substance, and I will answer both at once. Under the circumstances stated yesterday to the House, after having consulted Lord Granville on the subject, a telegram was sent to St. Petersburg; and, although it is an exceptional thing to do, I will read the telegram in reply—which arrived late last night—in the exact form in which it will appear in the Papers. It is to this effect—

"The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs states that the Russian troops will not advance from the positions now occupied by them, provided the Afghan forces do not advance or attack, or unless in case of some extraordinary reason—such, for instance, as disturbances at Penjdeh. He also states that the strictest orders have been sent to the Russian commander to avoid by every possible means a conflict, or any incitement to a conflict, and that the orders will be repeated."

We accept this communication as made in good faith, and, of course, as applicable both sides, to both parties; and acting upon our responsibility in the conduct of what I described as a National and Imperial policy, I and my Colleagues deprecate any pressure for further explanations at this juncture.

MR. GIBSON: Are we to understand from the answer of the right hon. Gentleman that Her Majesty's Government reserve to themselves on behalf of the Afghans the same right which the Russian Government retain for themselves of advancing "for some extraordinary reason?" I also wish to ask if the Prime Minister feels himself in a position to say whether this provisional arrangement would at all interfere with the business of the Boundary Commission, and when the Commission may be expected to have completed its work?

MR. GLADSTONE: With respect to the first part of the Question, I thought I had disposed of it by saying that we accept the arrangement as applicable on both sides. As regards the second point, I think I drew the other day a distinction between the case of a military advance which, however serious in itself, has no bearing whatever on the matter of right—I drew a distinction between that question and the question of right at issue between the two countries, and which, therefore, has been treated by us entirely apart. I accept the arrangement that has been made as fair, and I do not conceive that it can have any effect but that of facilitating the course of the inquiries. With regard to the precise

position of those inquiries, I am correct, I think, in saying that General Lumsden has made very considerable progress in what hitherto was quite unknown in that country—namely, the actual tracing of the frontier; but I would rather not give any information on that point.

MR. M'COAN asked whether Her Majesty's Government accepted this conditional agreement in satisfaction of their former demand that the Russians should withdraw from the positions they occupied?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The Prime Minister has stated that the Russian Government have sent orders to their officer commanding on the frontier. Can he inform us, without prejudice to the public interest, whether the Russian Government are in communication with their officers on the frontier, or how soon the orders sent will reach them?

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot state the precise time which it takes for a message from St. Petersburg to reach the Russian Commander; but the communication made to us is perfectly unequivocal and frank—first, upon the point that the strictest orders have been given; and, secondly, upon the point that they will be repeated. I have not the slightest doubt that they will be repeated.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: Is it not a fact that it is over 200 miles from the nearest telegraph station to where the Russian troops now are?

MR. GLADSTONE: I do not know the precise distance.

MR. ONSLOW: May I ask whether the substance of the agreement or arrangement arrived at with Russia is to the effect that the Russians have determined not to advance into what they consider the proper boundary of Afghanistan; or that they will not advance from the positions they now occupy?

MR. GLADSTONE: That is disposed of by the words of the telegram I have read. I will repeat them again—"The Russian troops will not advance from the positions now occupied by them."

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: May I ask whether this agreement is to rest merely on the verbal assurance of the Russian Minister to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, or whether it is to be consigned in any formal way into a diplomatic document?

MR. GLADSTONE: It is difficult to answer a question of that kind. The reply has come to us by telegraph from St. Petersburg, and I cannot doubt that it is a perfectly authentic statement.

MR. E. STANHOPE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, With reference to the statement of the Government in December last, that a communication had been addressed to the Government of Russia pressing for the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the position they then occupied beyond Sarakhs, whether any answer has been received to that communication; and, if not, whether it has been withdrawn?

MR. GLADSTONE: My hon. Friend is substantially quite correct in the reference he makes to what passed on a former occasion, when my noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs stated, I think in November, that we had pressed the Russian Government to withdraw from the position which they then occupied beyond Sarakhs. Then he asks "whether any answer has been received to that communication; and, if not, whether it has been withdrawn?" Upon that communication a correspondence ensued, and the Russians declined to withdraw their troops. They gave certain explanations about them, but declined to withdraw them; and they founded their answer upon the belief they entertained that the territory is theirs, and that they claim it as a matter of right. We, of course, had addressed a requisition to them in the belief that it was Afghan territory; but that being the state of the case, as the Russians made a serious claim to be the rightful possessors of the territory, we could do nothing in the matter consistently, I think, either with prudence or with any honourable regard to the interests of peace, except to prosecute measures for bringing about a proper investigation and decision of the claim that had been preferred. It was a presumptive claim, it was repeated by the Russian answer, and then it put us upon another course of procedure; and that being so, undoubtedly there has been—I will not say actually a withdrawal of the requisition—but substantially it comes to the same thing. The application that was made has lapsed from the circumstances of the case, and on account of the contentions that

are raised on the two sides respectively.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I understand this communication, addressed to the Russian Government, was to the effect that before Her Majesty's Government would resume negotiations, they should withdraw their troops from the positions they then occupied beyond the boundary. The Russian troops, we are told now, have not been withdrawn, the Russion Government refusing to withdraw them; but Her Majesty's Government have resumed negotiations.

MR. GLADSTONE: That is a matter I will not trust my memory to answer without a further reference, and perhaps the hon. Gentleman will give Notice of the Question.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Substantially, as I understand, we made a demand. Have we withdrawn that demand; and are we satisfied with the reasons given why the Russians would not withdraw?

MR. GLADSTONE: We made a demand unquestionably, as stated by the right hon. Gentleman, in the belief that the territory was Afghan territory. We found that that was the matter in contest—that it was part of the very matter that had to be decided in a regular, pacific, and, I hope, friendly inquiry. That being so, there certainly was no formal act of withdrawal; but substantially the demand was withdrawn.

MR. ONSLOW asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What steps have been taken to inform the Ameer of Afghanistan of the "new agreement" arrived at between England and Russia?

MR. GLADSTONE: We have no particular information on that subject. All we know is that Sir Peter Lumsden is in constant communication with the Ameer, and we have not the slightest doubt that he has communicated with him in reference to this matter.

MR. ONSLOW asked if Sir Peter Lumsden had been communicated with on the subject?

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not aware of that. It would be much more convenient if the hon. Gentleman would kindly address the Departmental Ministers on the subject.

MR. ONSLOW gave Notice that on Thursday he should ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government had communicated the agreement between Russia and Her Majesty's Government to Sir Peter Lumsden with instructions that he should inform the Ameer that such an agreement had been come to?

EGYPT—THE MAHDI.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government have arrived at any definite conclusion on the terms to be exacted from the Mahdi and his adherents as conditions of peace; and, if so, whether, in order to avoid further expense and bloodshed, Her Majesty's Government will instruct Lord Wolseley to take steps to make such terms known to the Mahdi and Osman Digna before resuming offensive operations?

MR. GLADSTONE: I think it would not be expedient on the part of the Government to enter into any statement as to the terms on which it would be possible for us to make any agreement with the Mahdi. If the hon. Gentleman will kindly refer to a statement previously made by me on the part of the Government, he will find that I stated it is our conviction that any attempt on our part to approach the Mahdi, even with the best possible intentions, would be much more likely to defeat the object in view than to effect it. That state of things still exists; but I am not aware that we have either repelled any advances from the other side or lost any opportunity on our part.

ARMY—THE ROYAL INFIRMARY, DUBLIN.

MR. EATON asked the Secretary of State for War, How many deaths occurred in the Royal Infirmary, Dublin, during the first week of March 1885; if it is true that there are no Military surgeons or orderlies of the Medical Staff Corps doing duty at the Royal Infirmary, and the patients are attended by untrained soldiers from the various regiments in the garrison; if it is true that, under the former regimental system, trained regimental hospital orderlies would have been available to attend patients belonging to their own regiments; and, if he will take steps to provide trained female nurses to attend to the more serious cases in the Royal Infirmary and other large Military hospitals?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: During the first week of March two deaths occurred in the Royal Infirmary, Dublin. According to the latest Returns, there were on duty in this hospital one surgeon-major in charge, four civilian surgeons, one sergeant of the Medical Staff Corps, with orderlies from Line regiments. It is quite true that under the former system the hospital orderlies would have been drawn from the regiments, and that they would have had a certain amount of hospital training, though far less than is now given to men of the Medical Staff Corps. Under that system, during war the regimental hospitals at home would have had their own orderlies; but in the field the trained orderlies would have had to be largely supplemented by untrained men, on whom the base hospitals would probably have entirely depended. At present, when an army is in the field, the hospitals at home afford for it an ample supply of trained orderlies, though their employment necessarily, to some extent, denudes for the time the hospitals at home. An augmentation in the female nursing staff at home is proposed in the Estimates for the ensuing year.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Agreement between the Powers with regard to the administration of Egypt has been signed; and, if so, whether he is able to communicate to the House the character of that arrangement?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I was rising from my seat at the moment when the right hon. Baronet rose to make some observations on this very matter. I take this opportunity of thanking the right hon. Gentleman and those who sit round him for the great consideratenees which they have shown in refraining from putting Questions on this particular subject. The delay has been a very long delay, and certainly much longer than I expected it would be when Questions were at first put to me. But at last I am happy to say that these deliberations have come to a close. I would observe, with reference to the words used by the right hon. Baronet, that it is an Agreement, not for the administration of Egypt, but for the regulation of the finances of that country. The matter is now substantially closed, and a Declaration relating to the Agreement has been signed to-day at the Foreign Office by all the Ambassadors who assembled there, and the Convention itself is to be signed to-morrow. With regard to the nature of the Convention, it would not, I think, be convenient that I should attempt to enter upon it now, nor could I, perhaps, give a perfectly accurate account of it on all points. Papers are in progress of preparation with all possible speed, and will be laid upon the Table at the earliest possible moment. In the course of to-morrow or the next day my noble Friend, I daresay, will be able to state the precise date when those Papers will be presented. I can assure the House that we are most anxious not to lose a moment; and when they are laid upon the Table we shall be equally anxious not to lose a moment in bringing the matter under the notice of the House.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: As the printing of the Papers must take some time, it would be greatly for the public convenience if we could be furnished, without delay, with information as to the general character of the Agreement that has been made.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The remark of the right hon. Baronet is quite just. It is desirable that the House should have as much time as possible for examining the matter; and I will consider what, upon the whole, would be the most convenient course to adopt.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I will put a Question on the subject to-morrow.

Mr. GORST: Could not this particular Paper be printed separately?

Mr. GLADSTONE: That is just what I am going to consider.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES—REPORT OF THE CHIEF REGISTRAR, 1853.

Mr. ACLAND asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to the concluding paragraphs of Part VII. of the Report of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies, 1853, page 20, with reference to the sale by sheets of the Abstract therein referred to; and, whether he is willing to take any, and, if so, what, steps to carry out the suggestion made in the concluding paragraph?

MR. HIBBERT: The paragraphs referred to relate to matters upon which the Treasury has for some time been in communication with the Chief Registrar, and we shall be glad if arrangements can be made to carry out his views.

MR. ACLAND asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to Part XI. of the Report referred to in the preceding Question, which deals with the Independent Mutual Brethren Society; and, whether the Returns of that Society establishes its ability, as now re-organised, to discharge its present liabilities to its members?

MR. HIBBERT: I have read the paragraphs of Mr. Ludlow's Report which refer to this Society, and have nothing to add to them. The Government is not responsible for the solvency of Friendly Societies; and my hon. Friend will hardly expect me to express an opinion on the subject.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) (*re-committed*) BILL.—[BILL 49.]

(*Mr. Gladstone, The Marquess of Hartington, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. Attorney General, The Lord Advocate, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress* 13*th March.*]

[FIFTH NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

PART I.

REDISTRIBUTION.

Boroughs.

Clause 8 (Division of Parliamentary boroughs).

MR. RITCHIE: Several attempts have been made on more than one occasion to ascertain from the Government what they consider to be the vital points of the Bill; but these attempts have always failed, or have been met evasively. It is evident to the Committee, however, that the Government are clearly determined to maintain the Bill, as it has been presented to the House, not only on questions of principle, but also on questions of even what some of us consider matters of merely minor detail. I am one of those who have always advocated, as strongly as I could, the arrangement in the matter which was ultimately come to between the Government and the Leaders of the Opposition, and I have not changed my opinion that that arrangement was a desirable one to come to, and that it was good for all parties concerned. But I am bound to say that the extremely hard-and-fast manner in which the Government seem determined to draw the lines of the agreement is calculated to militate strongly against any future proposal for entering into such an arrangement. We certainly did expect that there would have been some amount of elasticity in regard to questions of detail. But in whatever way these hard-and-fast lines may have been applicable to other matters which have come before the Committee on previous clauses of the Bill, I venture to say that the Government will find great difficulty in taking up that position in reference to the Amendment I have placed upon the Paper. Certainly nothing that may be said either by the Government or by the Members of the Front Bench below me upon the Amendment I am about to move can show that it is objectionable because it involves a departure from the principles contained in the Bill. So far from that being so, I believe it will be admitted both by the Government and the Front Opposition Bench that the Amendment I am about to move is one which carries out in its entirety one of the main principles, if not the main principle, of the Bill. That being the case, the Amendment which I have to move is one which not only ought not to be objected to by either Party to the agreement, but which ought to be welcomed by both Parties. I do not think I am wrong in stating that the principle of single-Member constituencies is one of the main principles, if not the main principle, of the measure. It was so described by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in introducing the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman stated that the division of constituencies into single-Member constituencies was one of the main principles of the Bill. The question then for consideration has reference solely to that principle. I may say that I do not wish to pause here to discuss whether it is a good principle or a bad principle—for my own part, I think it a good principle, and a principle the House ought to accept; but I

can understand that there are Gentlemen in the House who may consider that the principle is not a good one. I can understand that there are many reasons why hon. Members should arrive at a conclusion of that kind. All I would lay down on this particular principle is this—that as Her Majesty's Government and those who negotiated this compromise with them have considered it a good principle, this good principle should be applied to every constituency dealt with by the measure. How is it applied by the Bill, as it stands, at present? Every county is divided into single-Member constituencies. All the new boroughs are divided, and all the old boroughs which are allowed to receive an additional Member are also divided into single-Member districts; but there is this singular and, I venture to say, ridiculous anomaly in the system—that while the old boroughs which are to have additional Members and the new boroughs which are to be created under the Bill are to be divided into single constituencies, the old boroughs returning two Members are to be left undivided. The old boroughs which have had one Member added to them are to be divided into single-Member districts. I venture to say that this is a ridiculous and absurd anomaly, and I cannot conceive what possible argument can be used in support of it. I have inquired of many hon. Members on both sides of the House what argument can be advanced in support of the proposition contained in the Bill; but I can find no one who has been able to put forward a single reason or argument why these exceptions should be made. As far as I have looked into the matter there are 23 boroughs which will stand in the condition of dual constituencies, while all the other boroughs will be single-Member constituencies. So far as I can gather the only basis upon which this proposition is made in the Bill is the one stated by the Prime Minister when he introduced it—namely, that the unity of municipal life ought to be maintained in these boroughs. But what argument can the right hon. Gentleman employ for maintaining the municipal life of a borough like Dundee, and destroying the municipal life of a borough like Aberdeen? Dundee, being a borough which now returns two Members, is to be allowed to remain uncut up, while Aberdeen, which is a borough very similar in many respects to that of Dundee, is to receive an additional Member, and is to be divided into two single-Member constituencies. Surely the municipal life, of which the right hon. Gentleman spoke, will be destroyed in the case of Aberdeen by cutting up that city into two districts? Then, again, let me take the case of Leicester and Nottingham. What possible argument is there for maintaining the municipal life of Leicester and destroying the municipal life of Nottingham? I might go on multiplying these cases considerably, but I think the illustrations I have given are sufficient. If there be advantages in cutting up the municipal life of some boroughs they must equally apply to all boroughs. When the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister introduced the Bill he recommended the single-Member system. He recommended it on the ground that it would be economical. Then I want to know why, if elections in single-Member districts will be attended with economy, the principle is to be applied to Aberdeen and not to Dundee, and why it should be applied to Nottingham and not to Leicester? The right hon. Gentleman stated also that the single-Member principle went a very long way towards that which many hon. Gentlemen have at heart—namely, what is termed the representation of minorities, the representation of separate interests and pursuits, and that the adoption of the principle would lead to a large diversity of representation. Then I want to know why the 23 boroughs I have spoken of are not to enjoy that large diversity of representation which the right hon. Gentleman says is a capital object in a good electoral system? As far as I can gather there is no possible argument in favour of preserving the dual representation in the case of these 23 boroughs, and I am unable to see why the advantages which the right hon. Gentleman says, and says truly, are conferred by the one-Member system are advantages which ought not to be applied to all the boroughs of England alike. As far as the argument is concerned, I maintain that it is altogether in one way. My Amendment involves no departure, whatever, from the principle of the Bill, but simply an extension of that principle to the whole

of the Bill. I also contend that it is an anomaly to have 23 boroughs excluded from the general principle of the measure; but although it is an anomaly, I do not ask the Committee to reject it on that ground. I am not one of those who desire to see the Constitution of this country set out as a mathematical problem. I am not afraid of acknowledging that I have some regard myself for anomalies; but for this particular anomaly I cannot for the life of me see the slightest reason why it should be adopted, or why it should be considered a vital principle of the Bill by either one side of the House or the other. If the Committee will consent to my proposal, which is simply that all boroughs returning two or more Members should be divided into divisions, they will do away with a glaring anomaly for the existence of which no reason whatever can be assigned. I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name on the Paper.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 36, to leave out the words "mentioned in the Sixth Schedule to this Act," and insert the words "returning two or more Members,"—(*Mr. Ritchie,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The hon. Member has pressed the Government very much to state whether this matter is regarded as one of those vital points which entered into the agreement between the two Parties, and I therefore think it is only right that I should say that it is a vital point of the agreement, and that the adoption of the Amendment would be a breach of the agreement. The hon. Member seemed to think that the Government have determined to draw a line, hard and sharp, with regard to Amendments, in consequence of the agreement between the two Parties, and to apply it rigidly to all hon. Members who wish in any way to alter the clauses as they appear in the Bill. Now, Sir, I hope that as we go on in Committee the hon. Member will find we are by no means disposed to draw the line rigidly, but that we shall be ready to accept, freely, Amendments which do not interfere with general principles or with the lines of the Bill, and which meet with the approval of the House. When Amendments are in their natural place on the Schedules, hon. Members will find that there is a disposition on the part of the Government to meet what may be the general and freely expressed wish of the House. The hon. Member has spoken of the matter now before the Committee as if it were one of mere detail; but the view that is taken of single-Member districts is, as he has fairly stated, that the boroughs generally, as well as the counties, should be divided into single-Member districts, except the City of London, and except those boroughs which, having two Members at the present time, are not to receive more than two by the Bill—that is, boroughs which gain no advantage by the Bill. I would freely admit to the hon. Member that the arrangement that has been arrived at on this subject is somewhat of a compromise between opinions of different kinds. There are persons on that side of the House, as was shown by the cheers with which the speech of the hon. Member was received, and others also on this side, who are in favour of single-Membered constituencies, while, on the other hand, there are persons of both political opinions who are opposed to them. These differences of opinion are naturally reflected in any body of persons who may act on behalf of the different political Parties in the State. As I have said, I freely admit to the hon. Member that the arrangement to which he objects is somewhat in the nature of a compromise. I am, myself, like the hon. Member, in favour of single-Membered constituencies. I believe in them in principle, and I have argued in favour of them in discussions which have taken place in this House. But there is a great deal to be said in favour of departing from that principle, if you once adopt the principle of excepting any constituencies in any part of the Bill from the general rule. The hon. Member has pointed out that we retain in the Bill the second seat in the ascending scale of boroughs up to the point of 50,000, which gives two Members, and that in those cases we divide the constituencies to which the additional seat is given into two separate districts. He asks why, as a logical conclusion, we do not adopt the same course in regard to the boroughs which have two seats

already, and which are still to retain two under the Bill. Now, the general principle we have adopted has been to interfere as little as possible with existing interests in the middle size constituencies. We have displayed great tenderness towards them, both in regard to boroughs and counties. The hon. Member has asked upon what principle—if there is any argument or principle at all—we have been guided in the system we have adopted. We desire, as little as possible, to interfere with the unity of the boroughs which are given Representatives under this Bill. The hon. Member desires to secure the representation of minorities by providing single-Membered districts. So do I. But while it is easy to secure the fair representation of minorities in boroughs which are to have their Members increased, in boroughs having already two Members that is far less easy, for if there is a minority of a considerable size, the result, of course, would be that the minority would obtain far more than its fair share, and would, consequently, neutralize the political influence of the borough. Therefore, the representation of minorities on the single-Membered system does not apply so completely to boroughs with two Members as to boroughs having more than two Members. The hon. Member has drawn a sharp comparison between the boroughs of Dundee and Aberdeen and the boroughs of Leicester and Nottingham. Aberdeen is one of the boroughs which is to gain a double representation under this Bill, and in consideration of that fact it was thought fair that Aberdeen should be asked to submit to division into two parts. So also in the case of Leicester and Nottingham. Leicester gains no new representation, while Nottingham gains an additional Member. We have tried as little as possible to depart unnecessarily from existing arrangements. If we were to listen to the wishes of the constituencies, there can be no doubt at all that those which do not receive an accession of strength in their representation by this Bill greatly dislike the idea of being divided into equal parts. As far as I know, there is only one exception—only one out of the 23 boroughs spoken of by the hon. Member is inclined to favour a division into two parts, and that from local and personal reasons. All th others—22 out of 23—are opposed to the idea of division. Their view is not confined to one political Party in the State, but is shared generally by all political Parties and by the municipal authorities. Under these circumstances, I would ask the Committee to reject the Amendment of the hon. Member; but, in making that request, I will assure the hon. Member that he will find no indisposition to meet the views of the Committee generally later on in the Bill, when we come to the Schedules.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I have listened with surprise to the greater part of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. I was aware that the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) was an Amendment inconsistent with the terms of the agreement entered into between the two Parties, and I was, of course, prepared to find that the right hon. Gentleman would call upon us, under the terms of the agreement, to resist the Amendment, and I myself was prepared to do so on being so called upon. But there was one expression of the right hon. Gentleman which somewhat surprised me, and which renders it necessary for me, at all events, to rise, in order to prevent any misunderstanding on the part of the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman has said that the proposal with regard to these 23 boroughs is in the nature of a compromise. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that he, for his own part, is in favour of single-Member constituencies. Now, if these statements are allowed to stand without any comment, it might seem to imply that there had been a difficulty between the Government and the Opposition, and that it was the Conservative negotiators who objected to that principle of single-Member constituencies. I think the more accurate account would be this. Both the Marquess of Salisbury and myself were anxious to introduce the system of single-Member districts. We considered that single-Member districts would have many advantages, and among them the great advantage of aiding in a satisfactory way, to a certain extent, the representation of minorities. After consideration upon that subject, the Government agreed to accept the principle we had striven for. It was very doubtful, however, at that time how far the principle of

serve it would be attended with great disadvantages in other respects. But with regard to the towns which now return two Members, and are to continue to return two Members under the Bill, the considerations which have operated in our minds have been two. First of all, the desire of the towns themselves to have unity of representation is not an unimportant element. Speaking generally, I believe there is a strong desire on the part of the towns which now return two Members, and which are to continue to return two, to have their unity preserved. That, as I have said, it an important element in the consideration of the matter, and we think that, unless some stronger reasons exist than have already been shown, and which may be applied to the case, it is not desirable to interfere with the municipal and historical unity of these communities. My right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) has shown, I think, that there is a different reason which tells another way. Where you have a large town divided into five or six districts, the presumption would be that the different interests would obtain fair representation according to their magnitude and influence. Undoubtedly, it is very likely that in returning two Members, and where parties are almost equally divided, each party should return one Member, and in that case the minority would get more than it was entitled to. I admit that that is often the case now in particular towns, but it is done by the free will of the entire community. I do not object to the letting in of a second Member, although he may represent a somewhat smaller number of voters than those represented by his Colleague, provided it is done by the free will of the entire community. In the three-Member county constituencies, before the Minority Clause was introduced, where each elector had the power of giving three votes, if you will inquire into the history of the matter from the time of the first Reform Bill, it will be found that the majority had the means of appropriating the whole of the representation; but there have been a large number of cases since the Reform Bill where the minority has been allowed, under the Minority Clause, to obtain a share in the representation. Under all the circumstances of the case, I trust that the Committee will give its sanction to the Bill in its present state.

SIR FREDERICK MILNER said, he was afraid that unless the Government consented to give way, the Committee would have to submit to the anomaly which had been pointed out by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie). As, however, he represented a constituency (York) which was largely interested in the question, he hoped to be allowed to say a few words upon it. The Bill was founded on the democratic theory that each Party of the State should be properly represented. As objections were entertained against proportional representation, or any similar system for the representation of minorities, the Government and the Opposition Leaders had agreed to adopt what was called the single-seat system. It was quite true that many hon. Members viewed that system with daily increasing dislike; but no doubt it was the fact that, however much they disliked it, they must put up with it as they best could. He quite agreed with the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) that there was no possible argument why boroughs having more than two Representatives should be divided into single-seat constituencies, and why even counties returning two Members should also be divided into single-Member constituencies, if the same principle were not to be extended to boroughs already returning two Members, whose representation was not changed by the provisions of the Bill. He desired to point out that a great injustice might be done in a large number of places—especially where those who held Conservative and Liberal opinions were pretty equally divided—if this Amendment were not agreed to. He would take the case of York, where, in 1884, his majority was only 21. He was not supporting the Amendment from any selfish motive, because he had good reason to believe that, owing to the curious freaks in which Her Majesty's Government had indulged during the last 18 months, his majority would be increased very largely at the next Election, in consequence of the votes of a number of patriotic Liberals who valued the interests of their country above that of Party. But, be that as it might, hon. Members would admit that in a constituency like York, where the Con-

servative and Liberal Parties were almost equally divided, it would be a gross injustice if the opinions of each Party were not duly represented in the House of Commons. Yet, under the system proposed by the Bill, that was precisely what might happen; and if the Liberal Party in York found themselves stronger by only one vote, and all its members were whipped up by the exertions of the indefatigable 400, they might obtain both seats, and the Conservatives would have none, although the strength of the two Parties was nearly equal. It was quite evident that that would be a palpable injustice. No doubt it would be said that the same thing might happen if the borough were divided; but he would confidently assert that in no double-seated borough throughout the country, where political opinions were equally balanced, would two Liberals or two Conservatives be returned. He had not had the advantage of hearing distinctly the arguments which had been brought forward against the Amendment by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke); but he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that, as far as possible, the Government had been anxious not to interfere with existing interests. He (Sir Frederick Milner) confessed that he could not see how, by dividing the two-seated boroughs, there would be any interference whatever with any existing interests. On the contrary, he thought it would promote existing interests, rather than interfere with them. The only arguments he had heard outside the House were—(1) that it might happen that if the borough were divided, there might not be the actual number of voters prescribed for the return of a Member to Parliament; (2) that if the double-seated boroughs had been divided, it would have thrown much extra trouble upon the Boundary Commissioners; and (3) that it might possibly have increased the Conservative strength. The first of those arguments was the only one worth glancing at; but he did not see how any hon. Member could argue that the fact that each Member was not returned by the prescribed number of voters allowed for each Member ought to prevent such a fair system from being introduced, the general principle being to divide the urban districts in the country upon a system which would secure uniformity as far as possible. Hitherto Her Majesty's Government had not displayed much inclination to meet the wishes of those who sat on that side of the House; but he hoped they would think twice before they rejected the Amendment, and thus perpetrate an act of injustice which would remain as a great blot upon their Bill.

Mr. WARTON said he only wanted to make one short practical observation. He was very glad indeed to hear, at the beginning of this discussion, right hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House say that this question was a matter of contract between both sides. It was much to be regretted that the debate on the representation of the City of London the other evening was allowed to drag on for four hours, and, after all the discussion which took place, to find that the subject had also been a matter of bargain between the two Front Benches. It was desirable on this occasion to obviate a similar misunderstanding at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. HICKS said that he had an Amendment upon the Paper of a very similar character to the one which had been proposed by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie). There was only this difference between the two Amendments—that his included the words "except the City of London." He wished to put a question to the Chairman upon a point of Order—namely, whether, if the Amendment of his hon. Friend were negatived, or the first part of that Amendment were rejected, he (Mr. Hicks) would then be able to move his Amendment? He hoped he had made himself distinctly understood. What he wanted to know was, whether, if the first part of the Amendment were negatived, he would be in Order in moving the one which stood directly afterwards in his (Mr. Hicks's) name?

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Amendment of the hon. Member is very much to the same effect as that which the Committee is now discussing. If the present Amendment is negatived, I do not think the hon. Gentleman would be in Order in moving his Amendment.

Mr. HICKS said, that in that case he should like to say a few words on the subject now. The hon. Member for the

Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) had told them that he was one of those who approved of the existing alliance between the two Front Benches. He (Mr. Hicks) was one of those who had never approved of it. He thought there was evil in it in the first instance, and the more he saw of the Bill the more he saw the liberties of the House sliding away from under their feet. Could anybody doubt it? What did the hon. and learned Member for Marylebone (Sir Thomas Chambers) tell them upon that day week? The hon. and learned Member maintained that if the Motion then before the Committee had been put in a free House, the four Members for the City of London would have been maintained. [*Cries of* "No!"] Yes; that was what the hon. and learned Member said, and he (Mr. Hicks) contended that the liberties of the House were being destroyed by the agreement between the two Front Benches. He came next to the question of the one seat. There again he differed from his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie). He thought the one-seat principle was bad, and the principle which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister seemed to approve—namely, the principle of three-corner constituencies, was a much sounder one, and one that would be much better for the country. But if they were to have the single-seat constituencies, he maintained that the principle ought to be carried out universally, in the way it was to be applied to the counties and to a large number of boroughs, especially to those upon whom extended representation was to be conferred. There was no principle whatever in retaining the 23 boroughs to which reference had been made, with two seats for each borough. When the Prime Minister spoke of political life and historical life in boroughs, was there no historical life in the counties? Did not the electors in the counties desire to be retained as county voters, instead of having the counties cut up into wards with extraordinary names, which he believed the Committee would never, for one moment, retain when they came to the Schedules? If they would consult the county electors, he believed it would be found that they were unanimous in preferring to remain as counties, instead of being divided into districts. Her Majesty's Government, in this Bill, compelled them to become electors for divided constituencies, and yet they did not consider it necessary to apply their own convictions to the boroughs. Anyone who looked into the political constitution of the boroughs in question would find that the majority of Members they returned were supporters of this very truly Liberal Cabinet. For his own part he should certainly vote for the Amendment of his hon. Friend.

MR. RITCHIE said, that after the discussion which had taken place, and after what he had heard from the two Front Benches as to this question being a matter of bargain between them, he did not feel justified in asking the Committee to divide. He was certainly desirous of maintaining the bargain as far as possible, and he would not put the Committee to the trouble of a division. He thought, however, that it was a greater anomaly than the existence of these boroughs to find that the two Front Benches were in favour of the principle for which he contended, and yet that they had come to the conclusion that it was impossible for them to support it. They had had one or two reasons given for retaining these 23 boroughs from the other side of the House; but he thought that probably the real reason and the real argument had not been mentioned—namely, that for the 23 boroughs which were proposed to be retained as dual constituencies the proportion of Representatives returned was four Liberals to one Conservative.

THE CHAIRMAN asked if it was the pleasure of the Committee that the Amendment should be withdrawn? [*Cries of* "No!" *from the Ministerial side of the House.*]

MR. RITCHIE said, that as the Committee would not allow the Amendment to be withdrawn he should certainly take a division upon it.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 253; Noes 44: Majority 209.—(Div. List, No. 57.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: Before this clause is agreed to, I am anxious to say a few words to the Committee. The House has allowed myself and hon.

Members who agree with me to lay our views on proportional representation fully before it, and I do not propose to restate the case.

MR. HICKS rose to Order. He was afraid that, by an accident, the Chairman had overlooked his Amendment, which was to omit the 3rd sub-section of the clause. He had certainly not heard the Chairman call upon him to move it?

THE CHAIRMAN expressed his regret that he had overlooked the Amendment.

MR. HICKS said, he presumed he would be at liberty to move it now?

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid that the error I have committed, and which I sincerely regret, will prevent the hon. Member from moving the Amendment, the Question having been put, "That Clause 8 stand part of the Bill." It will, however, be open for the hon. Member to make any remarks he desires to offer to the Committee.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: Sir, the House has been kind enough to allow us to lay our views on proportional representation fully before it; and though this clause raises other considerations, and if the hon. Baronet the Member for Buckingham (Sir Harry Verney) goes to a division, I shall, of course, vote with him, still I do not propose to trouble the Committee by restating the case. No importance is, of course, to be attached to the division which took place on my Instruction, because it was during the dinner hour. If, indeed, we had only been defeated by 100 in a full House, when we had against us the Prime Minister, the Leader of the Opposition, and the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), that would be very encouraging. Moreover, though we had been deserted by one or two on whom we relied, we had received quite as many adhesions. Still we felt we could not reckon even in a full House on more than 150 to 200 Members. But, Sir, I am anxious to say one word more by way of explanation on the subject of chance. We have pointed out that if the second votes are distributed proportionally, there would be no element of chance whatever; but the mode we have suggested is somewhat shorter, and the chance which does, no doubt, theoretically exist, is infinitesimally small. We have stated that the odds would be 44,000 to 1 against chance making a difference of 100 in a constituency of 25,000. We made this assertion on the authority of Mr. Stokes, the eminent Professor of Mathematics at Cambridge. This statement has been flatly contradicted by the hon. and learned Attorney General and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. I have in vain attempted until now to induce any of our opponents to state on what authority they contradict our statement. But at length we have extracted an answer. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board seemed to regard it as a question of Oxford Mathematics *versus* Cambridge Mathematics, and he stated that a distinguished Oxford authority, Mr. Dodgson, "attached a far higher value to the element of chance" than Professor Stokes had done. Much surprised that Mr. Dodgson should have made any such statement, and being only anxious to arrive at the truth, I wrote to Mr. Dodgson, and asked him if he really questioned the statement we had made. In reply, he says—

"Dear Sir,—I have entire confidence in the accuracy of Professor Stokes's calculations, and fully accept his conclusion."

The statement of the right hon. Baronet, therefore, entirely breaks down, and I think the Committee and the right hon. Baronet himself will feel that we have completely substantiated our statement that the amount of the element of chance is just what we stated it to be. Whether it would be worth while to take the small amount of trouble which would completely eliminate even this minute fraction, I will not, of course, now occupy the time of the Committee by discussing. My right hon. Friend denies my statement that this Bill will multiply areas or dissociate the Parliamentary constituencies from the areas of local government. I confess I cannot understand this. Take Liverpool, for instance; it will be divided into seven constituencies. Is not this multiplying areas? In how many cases I should like to know—in how many of the whole number—will the boundaries of a constituency coincide with those of a municipality? But, Sir, though we do not propose to raise the question again, we are not convinced. In Ireland we believe the effect will be disastrous. Ulster, indeed, may, and I trust will, send Loyalist Representatives; but it is ad-

mitted on all hands that the effect of the Bill, out of Ulster, will be that our Loyalist fellow-countrymen may not obtain one, or, at any rate, not more than a single Representative. It seems unwise—might I not say it seems madness—to devise a system which will silence and exclude our friends, and give our opponents far more political power than under any just system they could fairly claim. Sir, I repeat that though we do not propose to raise the question again here, we are not convinced. The effect of this clause will be to lower the character of this House; in large districts of the country it will entirely exclude the minority from any share of representation; about once in every four General Elections it will give the minority in the country a majority in this House; and, lastly, as has been pointed out by every hon. Member from Ireland, to whichever side he may belong, it will silence and exclude our loyal fellow-countrymen in Ireland, and thus practically handing over the whole representation of Ireland, excepting parts of Ulster, to the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), will render the maintenance of the Union far more difficult, or perhaps render it impossible. We have done our best to prevent this, to warn our countrymen, and to avert these misfortunes. If any exertions of ours could induce the House and the country to pause before adopting a course so suicidal, no efforts on our part would be wanting; but we feel that in this House, at least, any further struggle would be useless. We shall continue our exertions in the country; but so far as the present clause is concerned, we are unwilling to give the Committee unnecessary trouble, and will therefore content ourselves with a respectful protest, and with the expression of an earnest hope that the country may in some way be spared the evils which we foresee, but which we are powerless to avert.

MR. HICKS said, he very much regretted that in consequence of the unfortunate, although, he was certain, unintentional, mistake on the part of the Chairman, he was not in a position to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice in regard to Sub-section 3, and that, therefore, he was compelled to trouble the Committee with a few remarks on the subject. They had been told more than once that the Bill was not intended to deprive anyone of his vote; but this Sub-section 3 did deprive electors of their votes. It introduced an entirely new principle into the mode of carrying out the registration of the electors of the country. From the time of the first Reform Bill, persons possessing freeholds in different counties, or in different divisions of the same county, had exercised a right of voting in those several counties and in those several divisions. In this great Metropolis, which nobody could look upon but as one town, it was perfectly capable for an elector to have votes for Westminster, Marylebone, and the City of London. In the same way, the cities of Manchester and Salford were close together, and the same elector might have votes for both. But by this sub-section of Clause 8, it was for the first time proposed that this right of a person to vote in two counties or two boroughs should be abolished. [Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: That is not so.] He (Mr. Hicks) thought that he was quite right. The words were—

"Where any Parliamentary borough is divided into divisions in pursuance of this section a person shall not be registered as entitled to vote and shall not vote in more than one such division."

That was the point, and he maintained that it involved the introduction of an entirely new principle, and that a disfranchising principle. If it was to be applied to the City of Manchester, it might be applied to counties, and to the division of counties; to counties returning two Members, and to borough districts. He thought it was the introduction, almost clandestinely, of the thin end of the wedge of the "one man one vote" principle. It was the most democratic proposal ever made in that House. It had been contended that every man had a right to a share in the representation of the country; but there was a great difference between an equal right to a share, and a right to an equal share. That was no new doctrine, nor was it a Tory doctrine. It was the opinion of a man who lived years ago, and was considered rather an advanced Member of the Radical Party—Horne Tooke. Horne Tooke said that he would give every man a vote for every bit of property he had in every parish. Horne Tooke contended, and he (Mr. Hicks) thought he contended fairly, that the

larger a man's property the greater the stake he had in the country, and the greater the interest. It had been contended that one man's all was equal to another man's all. But that could not be true, because the all of a man advanced in life could not be recovered, while the all of a young man of 25, if destroyed, might be recovered. The right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board shook his head at that statement. There was doubt that it had not been introduced into the Reform Bill of 1832, or into any subsequent Reform Bill. He found, however, that it was useless in the present temper of the Committee to oppose the clause as it stood; but he hoped on some future occasion to have the opportunity of raising the subject again.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. Member did not quite understand the effect of the sub-section, or he would not have said that the clause was a disfranchising clause. No person was disfranchised by this sub-section. The hon. Member stated that at the present moment a man could vote for all the divisions of a county, or in two counties; so he could under this Bill. No doubt the principle was objected to, and it was intended to raise the question by Amendments to be moved later on. The hon. Member stated that, under the existing system, a person might vote in more than one Parliamentary borough. Under this Bill a man would still be able to vote for more than one Parliamentary borough, and even for a greater number of boroughs than he could vote for at present, because there would be a larger number of Parliamentary boroughs than now existed. The number of the Parliamentary boroughs in the Metropolis, for instance, was increased by the Bill seven-fold. The hon. Member stated that at present a man could vote for Salford, and also for Manchester; so he could under this Bill. The Bill disfranchised no one; but at present a man could not vote several times in Birmingham, and the Bill did not alter that state of things. A man for municipal purposes was prohibited by law from voting for every municipal division, and the municipal law was applied by the Bill to Parliamentary elections in boroughs. Probably, when they came to deal with the Amendments which proposed to prohibit persons from voting for more than one county, or more than one borough, he would find himself in the same Lobby as the hon. Member; but that question was not raised by the present sub-section.

MR. HICKS said, he had listened with great attention to the right hon. Baronet; but he still maintained that the logical consequence of this section was to disfranchise men who had property in more than one part of a borough. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of Birmingham, and had stated that no one would be disfranchised. At the present time the electors of Birmingham had three Representatives, and every elector could vote for two of them. In future the borough would be divided into wards, and each elector would only be allowed to vote for one. What he wanted to know was, why an elector, having a residence in one district and a place of business and property in another, should not be entitled to two votes as he would be under the same circumstances in Manchester and Salford? There was no principle whatever in the case; and the Government were halting on this occasion—as they did on the last clause—between two opinions.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE thought the hon. Member had better not insist too strongly that there was no principle in the clause. Certainly in the boroughs the rating principle prevailed, whereas in the county elections the only principle involved was the possession of property. In a borough it was far easier to defend the retention of a name on the Register than it was in a county division. There was a common authority for registration purposes in the same town; but in regard to the county registration that was not the case.

MR. GORST said, that no doubt the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) was perfectly right in stating that this clause introduced a new principle. It might not carry it further than it was carried by the present law; but if it were carried to its logical effect it would be the "one man one vote" principle. Hon. Members below the Gangway appeared to be anxious to smuggle through the Bill, without its real effect being understood. All he wanted to point out was that this was a new principle introduced into their electoral system. Hitherto no man had

been debarred from voting in one Parliamentary constituency because he happened to possess a vote for another. Where the county or borough was large, and the constituencies were separated, any man could vote for each if he were upon the Register and possessed the qualification. This clause for the first time introduced this new principle—that in a limited number of constituencies carved out of what had previously been a single borough, although a man might possess votes in each separate constituency, he was prohibited by law from voting in more than one. He would not now discuss whether that principle was right or wrong. It was carried to so small an extent in the present case that it was hardly worth while fighting about except as a question of principle. He supposed that this was one of the points which had been considered and agreed to between the Leaders of both political Parties. At the same time, he must enter a protest against the danger of allowing a precedent to be set in this particular case, which, if carried to its logical consequence hereafter, would introduce a new principle into their legislation.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that no new principle was introduced by the clause. He thought his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) was mistaken in supposing that each ward or division of a borough was a constituency. Now, the borough was a constituency. It was only a Parliamentary town divided into divisions. The old principle was that one man might vote for more than one borough if he possessed the necessary qualification in each. That principle was still maintained; but by dividing a borough into different divisions each Member returned still remained a Representative of a borough, although for different divisions. At present, in the case of Birmingham, the Members returned were Members for Birmingham; and under this Bill the Members for Birmingham would not be Members of different constituencies in the borough, but for the borough of Birmingham. The only difference would be that, whereas at present each Member for the borough was one out of three, he would in future be one out of eight, and no elector would lose any portion of the privilege he now enjoyed.

MR. MACARTNEY said, that the right hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial Bench maintained that there was a principle in the Bill, whereas his hon. Friend the Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) maintained that there was no principle in it. Now, he did not altogether agree with his hon. Friend. He was reminded of the man who spoke of the seven senses, who, when told that there were only five, said—"Yes, there are five ordinary senses, but in addition to the five there are good sense and bad sense." In the same way he maintained that in this Bill there was a principle; but it was an abominable, bad, and unfair one. At present, if there were two Members, each elector could vote for two; but under this Bill no voter would be able to vote for more than one. It was all very well to say that the same elector might vote in different county divisions, or in different boroughs; but how would that be possible if it were provided that all the elections took place on the same day? Such a provision would effectually prevent persons who had votes for different constituencies from exercising the franchise. It certainly seemed to him that the Bill disfranchised those who ought to have a vote, and enfranchised those who ought not to have it.

MR. NORWOOD desired to call attention to what he believed to be an omission in the Bill. Under the Bill, however many qualifications a man might possess in the same borough, he would only be able to vote for one district. He failed, however, to see that there was any provision made by which the Revising Barrister could prescribe the district in which such voter should record his vote. In the case of a borough returning three Members in three separate wards or divisions there would be a considerable number of persons who would possess the necessary qualification for a vote in each division. Certainly the division in which such persons should exercise the vote ought not to be left to chance; and he could not help feeling that there ought to be some provision giving the voter the option of signifying the district in which he desired to vote, or failing such an expression of opinion on the part of the voter, the Revising Barrister should have the right of assigning the voter to any division he thought right. For instance, if

a man had a residence in one division, and did not express a desire to exercise the vote in another, an arrangement might be made by which his place of residence would be selected as a qualification. As he read the Bill, it contained no provision to meet that serious difficulty; and he thought it would be a serious difficulty in reference to boroughs divided into three or four districts, unless some machinery were provided to say where a man who possessed a qualification in more than one ward should vote.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the question raised by his hon. Friend was one rather for a Registration than for a Redistribution Bill. The point would not be overlooked, and would be dealt with in the Registration Bill.

MR. LEWIS said, the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) had remarked that this was the thin end of the wedge; but it seemed to him (Mr. Lewis) that a material element in the case had been overlooked. In some parts of the Metropolis the Bill would materially increase the number of votes one man might have. Take the case of Marylebone. At present an elector for Marylebone voted for Marylebone, although he might have property in Paddington and St. Pancras. By the division of Marylebone into three boroughs the same man would have a vote for each. So, also, in the case of the division of the present boroughs of Chelsea, Hackney, and Lambeth. He could refer to many cases in which there would be an increase of the franchise rather than the disfranchisement which was suggested by the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire. There were many persons in London who had establishments scattered all over the Metropolis, some of them having as many as 16 or 17, and they would be entitled to some six or eight votes, if not more.

MR. GORST said, that he had not overlooked that point; but what he contended was that this clause involved the introduction of a new principle. He was quite aware that in the Metropolis, where, as a matter of fact, the number of boroughs would be increased, plurality of votes would be very much increased, and the same man might have more votes than one. That arose from the fact that in the Metropolis the principle of division of wards into districts was not rigidly applied. There might be reasons for it in other cases, such as his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General had given; but certainly in Parliamentary matters and in Parliamentary voting a new principle was about to be brought in. He wished to know, as he had failed to gather any information from the President of the Local Government Board or the Attorney General, whether this principle was only to be acted upon for the day, and was to be thrown overboard whenever a more Democratic Parliament was elected? He was not inclined to carry the matter further. All he said was that he agreed with the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) that it was the introduction of the thin end of the wedge, and the establishment of a principle which might hereafter be carried very much further.

SIR HARRY VERNEY entertained very strong objections to the principle proposed to be established by this clause. He was convinced that under the proposed plan there would be a less independent class of Members returned than was formerly the case, and he recollected pointing that out when the Bill was first brought into the House last Session. He regretted that the division of the boroughs into single-Member constituencies had been made a vital part of the Bill. He believed that what the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks) had stated was quite true, and it was a misfortune to the country that the two Front Benches had come to an agreement. For his own part, he was very much inclined to rebel, and to invite the Committee to join with him in an act of rebellion. At present the Committee were altogether without information. They were in absolute ignorance of the grounds on which the two Front Benches had come to an agreement; and if such arrangements were to be entered into, it would be absurd to discuss any question that might be submitted to the Committee. He maintained that there were several provisions in the Bill which, if they had been discussed by the Committee separately without the existence of this understanding, would not have been accepted—for instance, the Committee would have, undoubtedly, rejected the proposal to increase the total number of the Members of the House. That

question had already been discussed all over the country, and a general opinion had been expressed that it was not desirable to increase the number of Members. Certainly he should have thought that advantage would have been taken of so good an opportunity for reducing the number of seats given to Ireland. He fully appreciated the qualities of the Irish people. He was well acquainted with them, having a large body of Irishmen always in his own employment, and he had never had the slightest occasion to complain of the conduct of any of his Irish labourers. He had known 80 or 90 of them formerly employed in his own neighbourhood to get in the harvest, numbers now reduced to 40 or 50, and reposed the greatest confidence in them. At the same time, he could not see that any good or adequate reason had been given for preserving the present over-representation of Ireland. It must be borne in mind that the population of Ireland had been brought down from 7,000,000 to 5,000,000, and it was impossible to say where the diminution would end. In the event of the population being reduced to 1,000,000, was the existing representation still to be maintained?

THE CHAIRMAN: I am afraid I must point out to the hon. Baronet that the question of the representation of Ireland is not involved in this clause.

SIR HARRY VERNEY said, he would apologize if he had, inadvertently, transgressed the Rules of the House. He would only add that he entertained a strong objection to the compulsory division of boroughs. He thought that the compulsory division of boroughs would in the future very much diminish, if not permanently injure, the character of the House of Commons.

MR. WARTON asked whether Subsection 3 was included among the articles of agreement come to between the Leaders of the two front Benches? [Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: No; it is not.] He (Mr. Warton) would like, under those circumstances, to make this observation. He thought it was extremely wrong in drafting the Bill to have one part of the clause a part of the bargain, and another part not. It would be much more advantageous if those portions of the Bill which were matters of agreement had been contained in separate clauses, while other parts which were not matters of agreement were put in a separate part of the Bill.

Clause *agreed to.*

Counties.

Clause 9 (Division of counties).

MR. MACARTNEY said, he had an Amendment upon the Paper to insert, after the word "Schedule," in page 3, line 12, the words—

"Except such counties as shall hereinafter by the provisions of this Act be deprived of one Member."

He believed, however, that after the arrangements that had been made between the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition, the proposal of any Amendment was like throwing water into a sieve. He had put the Amendment on the Paper with the intention of moving it, and of ventilating the point which it involved in the Committee; but he believed that he would be able to do so at a future stage of the Bill, and, therefore, he would not put the Committee to the trouble of discussing the Amendment now.

MR. PICTON moved, in page 3, line 19, after "Schedule," insert—

"Where any county is divided into divisions in pursuance of this section, a person shall not be registered as entitled to vote, and shall not vote, in more than one such division."

He ventured to differ from the hon. Member who had just spoken, and who seemed to think that it was altogether useless to propose any Amendment in that House. In spite of recent occurrences he should press his Amendment, because he remembered that in the course of the Autumn Session the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister stated, in answer to a Question, that hon. Members would be just as much at liberty to discuss the various parts of the Bill and to propose Amendments as they would have been if no agreement with the Opposition had been come to. He, therefore, intended to press this Amendment upon the consideration of the Committee, and he would do so in a very few words. As he gathered from the explanations which had been given by Members of the Government, the Bill was not intended to be a measure of disfranchisement, nor was it intended to do away with everything in the shape of an anomaly; but it was not designed

each division of a county were separate boroughs and counties for Parliamentary purposes. Therefore the adoption of the Amendment would introduce an entirely new principle. The Bill not only followed the present law, which treated each division as a unit, but they also acknowledged the existence of a double qualification, which had for years been recognized in the case of different counties and boroughs. The county qualification, which was a property vote, had been discussed on the Franchise Bill, and the House had decided to retain it. Therefore there was another reason for drawing a distinction in the case of county divisions and borough districts. He might point out to his hon. Friend that if he were to carry the Amendment it would substantially convert the whole of Yorkshire into one county for Parliamentary purposes.

MR. PICTON said, that might be expressly guarded against by the insertion of the words "new divisions."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had taken the words as they stood upon the Paper, together with the speech of his hon. Friend; and he failed to see how any distinction was drawn. His hon. Friend now offered to limit his proposal to "new divisions;" but in some cases a new division would not be altogether a new division—such, for instance, as the West Riding of Yorkshire. In boroughs the same condition of things did not exist, and it would be very difficult for his hon. Friend to word his Amendment in such a way that it would carry out the principle he recommended. The Amendment, however, was altogether outside the scope of the Bill; and it not only raised franchise questions, but new franchise questions, which were not raised in the discussions on the Franchise Bill last year, or in the discussions upon the Bill of the present Session. He was of opinion that if the Committee were to insert extraneous matter in the Bill they might jeopardize the settlement which had now happily been arrived at, and therefore he must resist the Amendment.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he thought the insertion of the Amendment would not only jeopardize the agreement arrived at, but would overturn it altogether. The hon. Member who proposed the Amendment supported it on the ground of what was called the "one man one vote" system. He (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) was certainly surprised to hear the right hon. Baronet express his approval of that system.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE remarked that he had done so in the discussions upon the Franchise Bill.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, that in those circumstances he was still more surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should, as a Member of the Cabinet, have given his adhesion to a Franchise Bill which did not carry out his own principles. That Bill avowedly retained the leasehold and the freehold franchise. And it was essential that the right of exercising these franchises should be continued to non-residents, unless the leasehold and freehold franchise was to be abolished altogether. He had no desire to enter at length into the arguments for retaining the law as it stood, because the right hon. Baronet had fairly stated that county voters had always possessed the right of voting for different divisions of the same county; and it was perfectly clear, as the right hon. Gentleman had shown to the Committee, that if the Amendment of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. Picton) were adopted it would have a disfranchising effect of a very extraordinary character. There was hardly a county in England which was not included in the 7th Schedule referred to in the clause under the consideration of the Committee. He would take the case of his own county (Gloucestershire). At present it was divided into two divisions, and a voter was able, if he had the necessary qualification, to vote in each division; but by the Bill it would be divided into five divisions, and if the Amendment were carried, the voter, instead of being able to vote, as at present, in two divisions, would be restricted to the one in which he resided. That would be the case all over England, and would apply to the great county of Yorkshire as well as elsewhere. If such a proposal were to be seriously made it would require very grave consideration; and he thought the hon. Member would find that it would be resisted, not only in that House, but throughout the country, in a way he could hardly anticipate. He did not believe there was the slightest prospect of the Amendment being accepted, and therefore it was not worth

while that he should detain the Committee further on the matter.

MR. MACARTNEY wished to say a word in reference to the observation which had been made by the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to intimate that the conduct of right hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side of the House was different from his own. [Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I did not say so.] He (Mr. Macartney) hoped that he was mistaken in the matter; but, at all events, the right hon. Gentleman on several occasions had taken the trouble to point out to the followers of the Prime Minister that instead of the provisions of the Bill being the result of conviction, after negotiation, he did not personally agree with some of the principles contained in the measure, although he was prepared to support them; and on more than one occasion he had foreshadowed that although he was bound now to adhere to the terms of the agreement he would be free to upset them in a future Parliament. This action on the part of the right hon. Baronet seemed to be a strong hint to Members sitting on the opposite side of the House, and especially to those below the Gangway, that they were perfectly free to oppose the Bill if they thought fit to do so, and to follow the line he had indicated. The hint had apparently been taken by some hon. Members in the case of the Amendment relating to University representation, and in another instance in which the lead was taken by the Prime Minister himself.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he wished to point out what was the effect of the words of the right hon. Baronet. As he understood the case, the Committee were discussing part of a Bill which had been agreed upon by the heads of the two great Parties in the House for the settlement of the Reform Question, and that the right hon. Baronet himself was pledged to vote for the settlement so agreed upon. If, then, the right hon. Baronet got up and said that the Amendment was one of which, although he was bound to vote against it, he was personally in favour, it appeared to him that he was by so doing upsetting the very idea of agreement. He would endeavour to give an idea of the position by a reference to another subject. They were at present engaged in important negotiations with a Foreign Power. Supposing that the Russian Plenipotentiary were to say that, although a document he might sign should be represented as an agreement, yet his private opinion was opposed to it; would it not be taken that that agreement was not to be observed? He was sure that the right hon. Baronet would loyally carry out the bargain entered into; but he (Lord George Hamilton) felt bound to deprecate such language, because it undoubtedly tended to raise false expectations on the part of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. If they were to understand that these two Bills were to be a settlement of the question, that settlement ought to be a permanent one.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he thought the noble Lord might satisfy his mind on this subject; he would simply ask him to read a letter which he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had written to the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard).

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he had stated that he was sure that the right hon. Baronet would loyally carry out the agreement; but he could not help deprecating the practice of making reservations which tended to weaken that agreement.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he might refer, perhaps, to the fact that similar reservations had been made on the other side of the House.

MR. PICTON said, that the best reply to the noble Lord was that he was willing to withdraw his Amendment. He was perfectly satisfied with the expressions which had fallen from the right hon. Baronet.

Question put, and *negatived*.

Clause *agreed to*.

PART II.

SUPPLEMENTAL PROVISIONS.

Clause 10 (Qualification by occupation of premises in immediate succession in divided borough).

MR. FIRTH said, the Amendments which he had put on the Paper were not exactly after the nature of Amendments, but were in the way of extending the provisions of Clause 10, so as to prevent there being in London absolute disfranchisement of a large number of persons. The right hon. Gentleman

the Leader of the Opposition had the other night, as he understood, expressed the idea that this Bill should not be a disfranchising Bill. As it stood at present, however, it was a disfranchising Bill, and, as regarded London, to a very large degree. He believed it would affect a good many thousand votes in London in this way. At the present time the law was that there might be qualification occupation by succession within the particular limits of any borough; and with respect to large boroughs outside London—as, for example, Liverpool and Manchester—that provision and power was maintained, but with respect to boroughs in London divided on parish lines that power was not retained. At the present time it was possible for persons to move from Hammersmith to Fulham and from Fulham to Kensington and preserve their right of voting; but under this Bill in future it would not be possible for a man to move into any one of the boroughs into which London was divided without losing his qualification. Clause 10 as it now stood was not intended to preserve that right; and, therefore, so far as those who now resided in large London boroughs moved from one part to another, unless they remained in the same parish, this measure would in respect of them be a disfranchising measure, and a disfranchising measure to a very large extent indeed. With one or two exceptions, there was no common stereotyped character about the London borough boundary line as it existed now. There was an Amendment on the Paper, put down by the right hon. Gentleman the junior Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), which had apparently the object of preserving the existing boundary lines. He admitted that if that clause were passed this Amendment would not proceed; but when it was reached he believed it would be shown that it was not a practical clause which could be inserted in the Bill. Dealing, therefore, with the Bill as it stood, he thought the clause would be a largely disfranchising provision. He had suggested that there should be occupation in immediate succession with respect to parts of the Metropolis. Now, for his purpose it must be admitted that the Metropolis was as much one town as were the many towns which would retain this power. They found constantly that people who only moved from their houses one street or two lost their qualification according to the part into which they moved. He did not suggest that his proposal should be extended to the ledger qualification; it was purely a household qualification, and it was suggested in the clause that it should apply throughout the whole Metropolis. Of course, if this were a crude and vague suggestion, standing alone without any intimation of the manner in which it should be carried out, it might be urged that it had not been properly placed before the Committee. Therefore he had added a subsequent clause, by which the Committee would see that the provision would be easily and fairly carried out. The clause was as follows:—

"Where a person qualified by occupation (otherwise than as a ledger) to be registered as a voter shall, during the period of qualification, have moved, in immediate succession, from one Metropolitan constituency to another, he may claim in succession, provided that, in addition to his claim, he shall deliver to the overseers a declaration showing the nature, description, and period of the qualification in the constituency from which he has moved, such declaration to be certified, after due inquiry into the correctness thereof, by the overseers of the parish in which such qualification was situated, who shall make and publish a list of the persons making such declarations, and in all cases where they are certified as correct the Revising Barrister shall insert the names of such persons in the list for the constituency in which they are resident. It shall be the duty of the overseers on whom the said certified declaration shall be served, immediately on its receipt, to obtain from the certifying overseers a duly certified copy thereof, which copy shall be open for inspection at such hours, and in like manner, as are claims and objections."

That he was told by those who were more experienced than himself was a perfectly practical way of carrying his proposal into effect. Now, the number of votes his proposal would affect in London had not been exactly calculated; but according to the most reliable estimate they would amount to something like 15,000 or an average, practically, of about 1,500 votes for each of the existing Metropolitan boroughs. The Bill, therefore, was a disfranchising measure, to the extent that it divided existing boroughs. Those who were familiar with the London parish system would agree that no serious harm could accrue to the principle of his Amendment being extended to the whole of the Metropolis. He had not raised the larger question as

to the extension of the principle to the country generally; but merely proposed to apply it to the Metropolitan area, of which he had considerable knowledge.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 35, at end of the Clause, to add the words—"The occupation in immediate succession of different premises situate within any part of the Metropolis, as defined by 'The Metropolis Management Act, 1855,' shall, for the purpose of qualifying a person for voting in any Parliamentary borough or division of a Parliamentary borough within the Metropolis, in respect of occupation (otherwise than as a lodger), have the same effect as if all such premises were situate in that borough or division in which the premises occupied by such person at the end of the period of qualification are situate.

"Where a person qualified by occupation (otherwise than as a lodger) to be registered as a voter shall, during the period of qualification, have moved, in immediate succession, from one Metropolitan constituency to another, he may claim in succession, provided that, in addition to his claim, he shall deliver to the overseers a declaration showing the nature, description, and period of the qualification in the constituency from which he has moved, such declaration to be certified, after due inquiry into the correctness thereof, by the overseers of the parish in which such qualification was situated, who shall make and publish a list of the persons making such declarations, and in all cases where they are certified as correct the Revising Barrister shall insert the names of such persons in the list for the constituency in which they are resident. It shall be the duty of the overseers on whom the said certified declaration shall be served, immediately on its receipt, to obtain from the certifying overseers a duly certified copy thereof, which copy shall be open for inspection at such hours, and in like manner, as are claims and objections."—(*Mr. Firth.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. WARTON rose to Order. The Committee had just passed a clause of the Bill which laid down a general principle with regard to existing occupation in Parliamentary boroughs. Now, the proposal of the hon. and learned Gentleman was to extend that general principle in the case of the Metropolis; and he therefore asked whether that could be done without indicating that it was done by way of Proviso or exception? It appeared to him that some such words as "Provided that" were required, because the proposal of the hon. and learned Gentleman in its present form was really contrary to the principle which had been adopted by the Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he had considered the point raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman with reference to the proposed Amendment, and he was of opinion that the Amendment was in Order.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he felt a considerable amount of difficulty with regard to this Amendment, because the general lines on which the Government wished to proceed were very clear, and were not easily applicable to this case. They did not wish to raise any enfranchising or disfranchising questions on this Bill, which provided solely for the redistribution of seats. But in the particular case of the Metropolis, it was difficult for them, as far as he could see, exactly to carry out that general principle. They must, he feared, either enfranchise or disfranchise as regarded the Metropolis. The difficulty was, that London was divided into four boroughs by the Bill, each having one Member. Now, at the present time, if a voter moved from one part of a borough to another he would still be on the Register; in future, if he moved from one part of Kensington, for instance, to another, he would be entitled to vote; but if he moved from any one of the four boroughs to another he would not get on the Register. The Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend would, therefore, enfranchise very largely, because it would allow any person to vote who moved from any part of London to another. For that reason he did not see his way to any middle course, which would, by the application of any provision, meet the views of his hon. and learned Friend, and keep things at the same time in their present position. It had been suggested that the Government might keep the Parliamentary boroughs of the Metropolis for the purpose of successive occupation registration; but as the Bill was not for any purpose of that kind, he thought it would be a very inconvenient course to take, and one which it would be impossible to adopt. He would like to hear the opinion of some of those who were largely interested in the Bill, as to whether this Amendment would not have a large enfranchising effect altogether outside the Bill; and, on the other hand, he would like to hear the opinions of those who objected to the Government being compelled to disfranchise, owing to what appeared to him to be unavoidable circumstances. With regard to the gene-

ral argument of his hon. and learned Colleague, there could be no doubt that his plan, if workable, would be applicable to the whole country; and, therefore, there appeared no reason why it should be limited to the Metropolis alone, if it would work without any risk of fraud. He agreed with his hon. and learned Friend with regard to the community of interest in the Metropolis; but there was no common authority which could efficiently represent the affairs of each particular person in the four quarters of the Metropolis. There was greater risk of fraud in London than in other boroughs of the country. If a man moved from Hammersmith to Poplar, for instance, he would be as much lost sight of for registering purposes as if he were to move from St. Andrew's to Poplar. The case of Wesleyan ministers, which had been referred to, was especially hard; they were moved every three years, and the result was that they hardly got on the Register until they were about to leave the place in which they had resided for that period. But that was due to the length of residence which the present law required. They had in this country an extraordinarily prolonged period of actual residence required for qualification—nominally one year's residence, but practically a residence of two or two and a half years. That being so, it was a question whether in any future reform proposed there should not be a provision for bringing the period of residence required for registration more closely into connection with the date at which the resident came into the place. He thought that shortening the period of residence was a matter which ought to be considered. As regarded the particular Bill before the Committee, he feared there would be no general consent in all parts of the House to the introduction of such a general enfranchisement as the Amendment of his hon. and learned Colleague would cover, and without that he did not think the Government could entertain the Amendment.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, if there were no other reasons, the observation of the right hon. Baronet would be a strong reason against the acceptance of this clause, because it was very obvious that a number of questions would be opened up by it, which ought to be discussed and dealt with, and which could not be conveniently dealt with in a Bill of this character, which was for the purpose of a redistribution of seats. He thought, under the particular circumstances in which they were placed, having regard to the history of the Bill, that the right hon. Gentleman would agree that it would be entirely outside the object they had in view and the spirit of the agreement entered into, if they were to introduce into the Bill matter which did not properly belong to the redistribution of electoral areas, but appertained to questions of franchise or registration. Therefore he hoped the Government would decline to accept the Amendment which the hon. and learned Member had proposed. He thought it perfectly clear that such an Amendment would be to a very large degree adverse to the spirit of the principle of the Bill—he referred to the one-Member districts—and the endeavour to concentrate as much as possible the electorate which each Member was to look to. Their object had been, in this arrangement, to make the electorate as reasonably small as they could, and by that means to bring candidates into closer relation with the electors. But if they were to introduce a principle of this kind, and in such a way as would admit of the principle being carried out all over the country, they would in part destroy that which it was their desire to maintain—namely, the close connection between the Member and the electorate; because by this Amendment was given almost unlimited power of increasing the electorate, and making it what he might call an artificial electorate. Under the working of the hon. and learned Member's clause, it would be competent, for instance, for the hon. and learned Member, if he were inclined, for the purpose of obtaining a larger majority in his own borough—it would be competent for him or his agents to sweep up a number of supporters and bring them from the Tower Hamlets or Greenwich to vote in his borough, with which they had had no previous connection. That would be to destroy what he might call the domestic character of the measure, and it would be at variance with the principle of continuous occupation in the existing boroughs. The boroughs were recognized as the home of the voters who voted there according to occupation. They said to the voter—

"If you remove from one street to another street you shall not lose your qualification, because you will still belong to the same constituency as before;" but if they adopted the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman they would be bringing in strangers from a considerable distance, who would not have the same moral right to vote which long residence conferred. The hon. and learned Gentleman had made allusion to the position of Wesleyan ministers. He said they were generally appointed to their several cures for periods of three years, and that before they were well on the Register they had to be taken off, because they had to go away. But that was the case with them, not only in the Metropolis, but throughout the country. A Wesleyan minister might be moved from Exeter to Plymouth or anywhere else, and it would be very difficult to meet such cases. If they were to meet the claim of the Metropolis in this respect, they would find it difficult to refuse to do so with regard to the boroughs throughout the country, and the result would be to bring forward that which the Bill did not encourage. They would be tending towards bringing into the constituencies the whole of England so to speak, instead of giving and maintaining to them a domestic character. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see that the clause could not properly be brought into the Bill, and that, under the circumstances, the Committee would not have to discuss it any further.

Mr. BRYCE pointed out that whatever might be the force of the argument of the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition, that the principle of the Amendment proposed would be applicable to the country at large, the Committee were then only engaged in discussing its applicability to the Metropolis. Unless the Amendment of his hon. and learned Friend were adopted, this would be a heavily-disfranchising Bill so far as the Metropolis was concerned. The constituency which he represented (Tower Hamlets) was, according to the Bill, to be divided into no less than five different boroughs; and the clause, as it stood, must necessarily disfranchise the large number of persons who had recently moved from one part of the district to another. He understood the argument against his hon. and learned Friend's proposal to rest on the ground that persons would be placed on the Register who were unacquainted with the localities. But those who knew the people in the localities of the Metropolis knew that their migrations were mostly within narrow limits. They migrated, for instance, in the part of London which he represented, for the most part, within the range of a mile or two. In the East of London many removals took place from Poplar to Limehouse, from Limehouse to St. George's-in-the-East, and from St. George's-in-the-East to Whitechapel, while hardly any took place from Poplar to Chelsea or Kensington, because the habits and occupations of the people did not lead them to migrations of that kind. Therefore, he said that the argument of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote) hardly applied to the Amendment before the Committee; and he hoped that, if it was to be made a question as between disfranchisement and enfranchisement, the more liberal interpretation would be adopted, according to the well-known maxim of the civilians. It was better, in his opinion, if the Bill could not be kept from effecting enfranchisement, that it should be prevented from disfranchising a large number of the people in the Metropolis.

Mr. MORGAN LLOYD said, that the proposal was that a man should have a vote if he came into the borough at any time before the 31st of July, even the day before, which was absurd. He thought there ought, at least, to be a Proviso that the individual had been resident in some part of the Metropolis. But even with that Proviso the proposal would be wholly unacceptable, as it would give the inhabitants of the Metropolis a qualification differing widely from the qualification now possessed by the nation at large.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 19; Noes 138: Majority 119.—(Div. List, No. 58.)

Mr. LEWIS said, that one reason for looking carefully into the clause was that, under the new Act, it would be possible to manipulate votes in such a way as would allow of 300 or 400 votes to be transferred from one constituency to another just before the end of the qualifying period. It was not difficult

to do that where the occupation related to houses, and it would be very much easier where one room would qualify. In cases where a constituency was closely divided this might be effected by Party combination easily.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 11 (Returning officers in new boroughs).

MR. HICKS said, the Amendment standing in his name having been put down before the Bill was reprinted, it was no longer applicable, and he should not move it.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, before the hon. Member for Monmouth (Mr. Carbutt) moved his Amendment, he would suggest that it would be more conveniently moved at the end of the clause.

MR. CARBUTT said, the object of the Amendment he was about to move was that the Writ of Election for the Monmouthshire District Boroughs should be directed to the Mayor of the borough which had the largest population. Monmouth had hitherto been the polling place for the boroughs; but the population of Newport had, since that arrangement was made, largely and rapidly increased. It had now 46,000 inhabitants, whereas the population of Monmouth was only 6,000. The Committee would, therefore, see that there was some reason for his Amendment. But, in addition to what he had stated, the rateable value of property in Newport was eight times that of Monmouth. The arrangement he proposed would lessen both time and expense, so far as the officers were concerned who had to count the votes.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 21, at end of Sub-section (3), insert—"Provided, That, with respect to the Monmouthshire District Boroughs (notwithstanding that it may have been otherwise determined), the Writ of Election shall be directed to the Mayor of that one of the municipal boroughs which has the largest population, according to the last Census for the time being."—(*Mr. Carbutt.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had personally no objection to the words of the Amendment; but he pointed out that they raised a question which applied to other groups of boroughs, not only in Wales, but throughout the country. The Writ of Election had been sent to the borough of Monmouth by immemorial custom, and the hon. Member wanted it to be transferred to Newport. Newport was a very much larger place than Monmouth now, and he had no objection, if the feeling of the Committee was that the alteration should take place, to the Proviso being added; but he thought, if there was likely to be any discussion upon it or waste of time, the question was hardly worth the trouble that would be spent upon it.

MR. WARTON said, it was all very well for civilities to pass between the right hon. Baronet and one of his supporters with regard to this Amendment; but he thought the right hon. Baronet himself must have a conviction in his own mind that it would not be allowed to pass without comment, and without other similar proposals being made. There ought to be some understanding how far the principle was to be applied, or the door would probably be opened to a very wide discussion on other cases.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he hoped the Committee would pause before accepting this Amendment, the adoption of which would lead to all sorts of difficulties. On the other hand, he thought it was important that the Writ should be made returnable at the place having the largest population, although the principle must not be carried too far, or many difficulties would arise. He did not wish to prevent a regulation being framed with that object, provided it did not appear in the form of a piece of special legislation, in which case some Court or authority would be required to prevent the principle thus admitted being made applicable to the innumerable county districts which might set up rival claims to be made the place where the Writ was returnable. He thought all the questions of the kind that would arise would be extremely inconvenient; and therefore he considered that the principle of the Amendment was one against the admission of which the Bill ought to be carefully guarded.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, he did not think that any inconvenience could arise if the proposal of the hon. Member for Monmouth were adopted. Newport had not only the largest population, but it was the most convenient centre. If

the right hon. Baronet thought it necessary to apply the principle to the other Welsh boroughs, he did not think there would be any difficulty in the way of that being done, because, although it would make a slightly different arrangement in Pembrokeshire and Glamorganshire, it would produce no change in the boroughs of Carnarvonshire, Denbighshire, Montgomeryshire, or Flintshire. Therefore, he thought there was no difficulty in the way of the Amendment.

MR. HICKS said, he did not wish to express any opinion as to the desirability of removing the Writ from Monmouth to Newport; but he thought the clause of the hon. Member, in its present shape, would open the door to a very great deal of inconvenience in future by the creation of these movable centres. He thought that if they were to have any change in the present case, it ought to be made in the Bill by simply substituting Newport for Monmouth. If they were to do the same thing with regard to the other groups, the question might be raised on each group as to whether the Writ should be sent to the largest town. He was in favour of a steady and uniform system being established.

MR. LEWIS said, the interruptions by some hon. Members opposite were most disorderly, and he must claim the protection of the Chair. One hon. Member had indulged himself by interrupting every Member who had risen to speak on the Amendment from that side of the Committee. If the hon. Member did not want to take part in the deliberations of the Committee he could be spared. With regard to the Amendment, the hon. Member who moved it had not stated to the Committee what the Monmouth Mayor thought of his proposal. He did not understand from the hon. Member that it had received the assent of the Mayor of Monmouth; and, therefore, he thought there might be some complaints if the Committee were to take one side or the other in this particular case. Under the circumstances, he thought that the proposal should be made in some more definite form, and that it should be taken after full Notice on Report, otherwise its adoption might come as a surprise upon the Mayor of Monmouth.

COLONEL STANLEY said, that if there really was an earnest desire, as there seemed to be, to make progress with the Bill, it was as well that the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) should be accepted. The adoption of that suggestion would in no way prejudice the Amendment; but it would give an opportunity of notice being attracted to the question. It might be possible that on Report the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would see his way to deal with the matter.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he hoped the hon. Gentleman the Member for Monmouth (Mr. Carbutt) would adopt the very sensible suggestion which had been made—namely, to withdraw the Amendment now, and allow the question to be discussed on Report.

MR. CARBUTT said, he would be glad to accept the advice of the Government.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Clause *agreed to*.

Clause 12 (As to boroughs divided into divisions).

Clause 13 (Registration of freemen in divided boroughs).

Clause 14 (Adaptation of 46 and 47 Vic. c. 51, to divided borough).

MR. WARTON said, he had Amendments to this clause to propose which he had not had an opportunity of handing in. The first Amendment was a very small one; but he hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would see the wisdom of accepting it. He proposed to move the omission of the word "and," in line 39, and to substitute the word "or." It was quite clear that if they meant to deal with "election agent, sub-agent, polling agent, clerk, messenger," their meaning would be better expressed by the use of the word "or" than "and." It might be that some person would discharge the functions of "clerk or messenger." Surely it was intended that the clause should apply to election agent or sub-agent, a polling agent, or clerk or messenger? He was supported in this by line 42, where it stated "agent, clerk, or messenger."

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 39, to leave out the word "and," and insert the word "or,"—(*Mr. Warton.*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'and' stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he thought the word "and" was correctly used. It was desired to apply the provisions of the Schedule to all persons named. It was not at all necessary to say "or."

MR. TOMLINSON said, that if the word "and" was retained, the words election agent, sub-agent, &c. should be put in the plural.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that the word "any" meant "every."

MR. TOMLINSON said, that if they had regard to the word "any" the clause was a disjunctive one. If the word "or" were used, the substantives ought to be made plural.

MR. WARTON said, that in line 42 the matter was properly expressed. If it was right to say "and" here, why did not the Attorney General insert "and" for "or" in line 42? He should persist in his Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 75; Noes 13: Majority 62.—(Div. List, No. 59.)

MR. WARTON said, he had another Amendment to this clause to propose. He desired to move the omission of the words "the whole of a county at large or of" in line 40; and, of course, if the Amendment were adopted, it would be necessary to propose subsequently several consequential Amendments. Up to the present it had been loudly asserted—it had been asserted that night by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in charge of the Bill—that county constituencies were separate constituencies, and that borough constituencies were not so separate. Union was kept up for certain purposes in borough constituencies; but county constituencies were held to be essentially different. Each division of a county was a county in itself, so to speak. That was a principle laid down so late as that very day by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke), and that was a distinction which was particularly emphasised in Clause 9. It was very proper to put down corruption; but it seemed to him to be perfectly absurd that a man who happened to be employed in one division of a county as a polling agent, for instance, should not be allowed to vote, if he had a qualification, in another division of the county possibly 80 or 90 miles distant. The effect of the Amendment he had the honour to bring before the Committee was to omit all the words which related to counties, and to restrict the clause to Parliamentary boroughs so-called. The county of York was divided into 10 or 11 different divisions; surely a man who was employed and paid as an agent or clerk or messenger in one division of the county should not be debarred from voting in any other division of the county in which he might have a vote.

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 40, to leave out the words "the whole of a county at large or of."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it was quite true, as the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Warton) had said, that for the purposes of voting divisions of counties were regarded as different constituencies. But this was a question of corrupt practices, and when they saw what might be done and the evils they had to meet he doubted the wisdom of accepting the Amendment. Some of the divisions of counties were very populous, and great organizations would be found to exist in them. Of course some divisions adjoined, and the result would be that as the elections did not necessarily take place on the same day the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act would be defeated if they made an arrangement by which a person should be employed in one county division and vote in another. If the arrangement made in the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act was right in the first instance, surely it was well now to insist that persons who were paid should not evade the provisions of the arrangement by being employed in one division and voting in another. On the whole, he wished to adhere to the principle the House endeavoured to carry into effect upon the Parliamentary Elec-

MR. MACARTNEY observed, that there were organizations which took cognizance of what went on throughout the country. There were in London a Conservative organization and a Liberal organization, and they controlled what was done by the Parties in the country generally. It seemed to him that if a man was prevented from voting according to his opinions in one division of Middlesex because he happened to be employed as agent in another division of the same county, he ought also to be prevented from voting in the Orkneys.

MR. MONTAGU SCOTT said, it appeared to him that this Bill was intended to disfranchise all political agents. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had suggested that the organization for different divisions of counties was the same. Now, the county of Sussex was divided into East and West. He (Mr. Scott) had the honour to represent East Sussex; but he had nothing whatever to do with West Sussex, nor had the people in the East of the county anything to do with those in the West. Was his (Mr. Scott's) political agent, who might have very considerable property in West Sussex, to be deprived of his vote in the Western Division? It seemed to him that to this matter "distance lends enchantment." He supposed that if an agent in East Sussex had property in Yorkshire he would be allowed to vote in Yorkshire? Suppose that a man employed as an agent had a vote in Sussex and another in Surrey. Was he not to be able to vote in Surrey because Surrey and Sussex adjoined? [The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): We allow that.] He (Mr. Scott) had understood that the different divisions of a county practically formed different counties. Now, in Sussex, there was to be a division of Rye and a division of Chichester, and these divisions were 40 miles distant. Was a man employed in one division as an agent to be deprived of his right to vote in the other division? A proposition more unjust—he was almost inclined to say tyrannical—was never made. If his hon. and learned Friend divided the Committee, he (Mr. Scott) would certainly vote for the Amendment.

MR. WARTON said, it was all very well for the Attorney General to pooh-pooh this matter; it was much more important than the hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to imagine. He (Mr. Warton) was extremely obliged to his right hon. Friend the Member for North Hampshire (Mr. Sclater-Booth) for assisting him on the present occasion, and in support of the observations of the right hon. Gentleman he begged to remind the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General that now there could only be one paid agent; the number could not be multiplied, as it was fixed by the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act. He thought the Attorney General desired to draw the line very strong. An agent was to be permitted to vote at a borough election in the county; but he was not to be allowed to vote in another division of the county, which might possibly be 80 or 90 miles from the one in which he was employed.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, that this seemed to be something like a discussion as to the prohibitive degrees of marriage—how far they might go, and how close the intimacy was. He did not understand that anybody had the least intention of casting a reflection upon the characters and fitness to vote of those excellent persons who did good service as election agents. It was, however, quite reasonable and proper that a man should be precluded from voting in the particular division in which he was employed as agent; but it would be very hard that, because a man was agent in one district, he should be precluded from voting in another district which his agency did not affect. He (Sir Stafford Northcote) thought it would be desirable to accept the Amendment which had been proposed by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), though he was not anxious to press anything on the Government that they did not see the reason of in that respect. As he understood the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General was willing to consider the matter on Report, he was not at all sure it would not be well to adopt the Amendment at once.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he should feel disposed to accept the view of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote) if it were pressed. It was a very small matter; but if the hon. and learned Member thought it

MR. SMALL said, he was very happy to hear that announcement from the right hon. Baronet; and he had no doubt that either he (Mr. Small) or some of his hon. Friends would be able, on Report, to show that the words were not sufficiently guarded.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 16 (Saving of rights of voters on change of Parliamentary area if otherwise qualified), *agreed to.*

Clause 17 (Detached parts of parishes).

MR. WARTON said, he desired to make certain with regard to the details of this clause when considered in connection with the Divided Parishes Act. He wished to ask the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill (Sir Charles W. Dilke) whether certain parts of a county could be taken from certain parishes and united to another county? If that was so, what was the reason for it? How could it be done?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the Government had power in the Local Government Board, under the Divided Parishes Act, to issue Orders for the purpose of throwing divided parishes into other parishes; but their Orders at the present moment would have no power to change the voters from one county division to another. In his opinion, it was doubtful whether Parliament would like to give the power in the case of detached places of changing voters from one county to another.

MR. WARTON said, he was under the impression that the Local Government Board had already issued Orders beyond the 42nd section of the Divided Parishes Act. They had issued Orders, he believed, that for all purposes certain parts of a county should be taken from certain parishes and united to others. The doubtful point of law that was raised would not affect this clause. There had been great doubt as to what Parliament meant at the time of the passing of the Divided Parishes Act. The fact was that Parliament had forgotten the question—it had local boundaries in its head, and did not provide for Imperial matters. It did not consider what should be done in the case of Parliamentary boroughs. The words in the clause would not have given the power to transfer Parliamentary voters, if that power was not already conferred by the existing law.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 18 to 25, inclusive, *agreed to.*

PART III.

DISQUALIFICATION OF VOTERS FOR CORRUPT PRACTICES.

Clause 26 (Adaptation of certain enactments as to disqualification of voters for corrupt practices).

MAJOR CURZON said, that in the absence of his hon. Friend the Member for Southampton (Mr. Giles), who had an Amendment on the Paper to leave out this clause, he should like to ask the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill (Sir Charles W. Dilke) whether the Government would consent to postpone it until the Committee had dealt with Clause 27? There were a number of hon. Members in the House very much interested in several of the corrupt boroughs mentioned in Clause 27. They were not so much interested in the boroughs mentioned in Clause 26; and he was afraid that if Clause 26 were taken now, it would rather prejudice the case of those hon. Members when they came to argue it in connection with the next clause. If the Government could see their way to the postponement of Clause 26 he should be extremely glad. He was not sure that they would be able to do it. He should like to point out that in the case of four boroughs they had been already disfranchised 18 years, and in the case of the four remaining they had been already disfranchised 15 years. Perhaps the right hon. Baronet could consent to postpone the clause.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, who was not now in his place, but who, he hoped, would be in the House in the course of a few minutes, was disposed to make a concession in this matter. In fact, the hon. and learned Gentleman had already said as much. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) did not know that there was any necessity for postponing Clause 26, as he thought that the Committee was perfectly able to deal with it now. However, to meet the views of hon. Members, he would consent to the postponement until Clause 27 had been disposed of.

Clause *postponed.*

MR. JOHN BRIGHT said, he had not been able to gather what the Government proposed to do with Clause 26.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: It is only postponed for the present.

Clause 27 (Disqualification of certain voters for corrupt practices).

MR. RAIKES: I rise, Sir, to move an Amendment of which I have given Notice with regard to this clause, and I hope that it will afford an opportunity to the Government for tempering justice with mercy in their dealing with the particular constituencies to which it relates. The Amendment is—

"Page 10, line 17, leave out 'for ever,' and, after 'incapable,' insert 'during the period of seven years next after the presentation of the said Reports respectively.' "

The clause, as it stands, proposes to inflict disfranchisement for life upon the persons who have been found guilty, or who have been reported in the Schedules of the Reports of Election Commissioners to have been guilty of bribery, treating, or personation, at elections held in the year 1880 for these respective boroughs—the boroughs being those mentioned in the second part of the 8th Schedule of the Act, and whose names are already sufficiently notorious. Now, I feel that this question is not, by any means, without difficulty—that the Committee will find some difficulty in dealing with it. It would certainly be difficult for the House to assent to the very severe penalty which the Government has proposed to attach to the persons guilty of corrupt practices at these elections. Perhaps, as the case of Chester is likely to be mentioned in the course of the debate, I may say that I am appearing here rather as an apologist for persons who did me very considerable injury at that election than in any other capacity. I cannot help thinking that the Committee will be unwilling to inflict retrospective penalties upon persons who on that occasion were guilty of corrupt practices. The Act of 1883 was not passed when these offences were committed; and the offenders, who rendered themselves liable to the just resentment of this House, exposed themselves, presumably, only to such penalties as the law, in its then form, might bring upon them in regard to their particular cases. The Amendment I have ventured to put upon the Paper is one which proposes to deal with these offenders exactly as they would have been dealt with if the Attorney General had in 1881 followed the precedent of Norwich and Boston, and brought in a Bill proposing to inflict certain political disqualifications upon the persons who had been scheduled by the Commissioners. The various boroughs that had been visited by Commissioners at different times have been dealt with, as we know, in more than one way. In the majority of instances there has been inflicted upon them the penalty of complete extinction. Those boroughs that are mentioned in the first part of the 8th Schedule of this Bill, the well known boroughs of Beverley, Bridgwater, Sligo, and Cashel, and, in former years, the boroughs of Lancaster and Great Yarmouth, were absolutely and totally disfranchised by the action of Parliament after the Commissioners had reported upon them. But in the case of Norwich and Boston a different and more lenient course was adopted. I will not trouble the Committee with the details of the Norwich case, which were rather special. I will only say, in passing, that in this case the Writ for the election to fill the vacancy was suspended, and certain persons—I think freemen—were disfranchised. I would rather rely upon the precedent established in the case of Boston. In the case of Boston the voters scheduled by the Commissioners were subsequently, by Parliamentary enactment, deprived of their electoral rights, with regard to their qualification in boroughs, for seven years. It will be seen that the distinction as between the course proposed in the clause of this Bill, and the course to which I am referring, is a considerable one, and that my proposal leans very much to the side of mercy. On the other hand, it differs, I believe, somewhat widely from the course which has been proposed by the hon. Member for West Cheshire (Mr. H. Tollemache), and the hon. Member for Southampton (Mr. Giles), who are disposed to dispense with this clause altogether, and to grant to these persons a complete amnesty. I have to put to the Committee this consideration. You are now passing an Act of Parliament by which, in future, it will become practically impossible to disfranchise a constituency, because the

whole country being divided into districts in which the franchise is in the main the same, any disfranchisement which may light upon political offenders will have to be confined to them personally. How are you to set forth on a course of dealing with offenders for corrupt practices personally, if the first step you take in that course is to be one of granting a complete and absolute amnesty for offenders at the last Election? You have passed since that Election an Act which imposes very much more serious penalties for corruption, and on that you propose, for the future, to rely. I would ask you, will you obtain credit for sincerity and earnestness in doing so, if the first thing you do after passing that Act is to remove, absolutely, the penalties that attached to corrupt practices at a period a little before that at which that Act became law? Now, I do not want to dwell upon the details of corrupt practices in these different constituencies, but, at least, I may be permitted to say that you have already dealt out a somewhat severe measure to two out of the six "peccant boroughs," as they were called, by formally stigmatizing Sandwich and Macclesfield as unfit, hereafter, to retain the *status* of Parliamentary boroughs. Will it not look strange if, having dealt out that severe and uncompromising justice to Sandwich and Macclesfield, this House is afterwards to accept any Amendment for absolutely releasing from all penalty the other boroughs which appear to have offended, if not absolutely in the same degree, at least in the same way? I should be extremely sorry to see this House stretch too hard, too tight, and too fast a line of strict austerity in dealing with this class of boroughs. I should be very reluctant to accept any proposal which would deal with Oxford, with Canterbury, with Gloucester, and with my own old constituency Chester, in the same way in which we have already dealt with Macclesfield and Sandwich; but I cannot help thinking, at the same time, that this House would put itself in a false position if, in its anxiety to be generous and indulgent, it should altogether remit any penal consequences whatever for offences that only varied in degree from those which have been visited by political annihilation. I feel sure that in dealing with this question the Government will be anxious to, as I said in the first instance, temper justice with mercy; and I very confidently appeal to the Prime Minister with regard to this particular class of persons. The Prime Minister throughout his long and distinguished career has, I think, always been conspicuous, if I may say so, for the robust common sense with which he has dealt with questions of this sort. He has never used the extravagant language which has sometimes been in favour, first upon one side of the House and then upon the other. He has regarded this evil as more or less inherent in our political system, and when it has been necessary to apply a penalty he has imposed it, but, at the same time, he has not been among those who have allowed themselves to be carried away by sentiment; and thus, I hope, he has considered the matter on the one side or the other, and that we shall hear his views on it before the discussion closes. The Committee will understand, perhaps, that in endeavouring to take the course which I have pointed out by my Amendment to-night, I have been moved entirely by a sense of public duty. It is a difficult thing for me to deal with this matter at all; but I feel that I should be unworthy of a position in this House if I shrank from dealing with a question of this difficulty, because I might be suspected of having some personal feeling in the matter. I have done my duty, I think, in proposing the Amendment that stands in my name. I hope the Committee will deal with it fairly and in a judicious spirit, and will not allow itself to be carried away by passionate appeals *ad misericordiam* on the one hand, or on the other by a too rigid adherence to the severe penalties of the Act dealing with corruption at elections last placed upon the Statute Book, so far as the elections that took place shortly before that Act was passed are concerned.

Amendment proposed,

In page 10, line 17, to leave out the words "for ever," and, after the word "incapable," to insert the words "during the period of seven years next after the presentation of the said Reports respectively"—(*Mr. Earles*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. MONK said, that in the few remarks he desired to address to the

Committee on the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), he desired, in the first place, to express the strong sense which he entertained of the fairness and equity which had been shown by the Government in not including the borough he had the honour to represent (Gloucester) in the Penal Clause No. 3 of this Bill; and though he had been prepared to show the House very good reasons why Gloucester should not meet with the fate which it was originally proposed that it should meet with under the Bill of a previous Session, he, at the same time, was ready to acknowledge, on behalf of that city, the leniency which had been shown to it by the Government in the Bill which was now before the Committee. His right hon. Friend had pointed out, with very great force, that since the Election of 1880 a new Corrupt Practices Act had been passed which inflicted upon those who received bribes a lighter penalty than that which it was proposed to inflict by this clause; but, in moving his Amendment, his right hon. Friend had omitted to point out that the Royal Commissioners who were appointed in 1880 took every means, and very properly took every means, in their power to ascertain who had given bribes and who had received them. They even went so far, in some cases, as to invite persons to send in lists of suspected bribers or bribees, and at the same time they called the electors before them, and, before examining them as to their complicity in these illegal acts, promised them a certificate of indemnity if they answered freely all questions which were addressed to them. In some instances, to his knowledge—and he was sorry his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General was not present, because he could have brought one of these cases very clearly before his mind—in the city with which he was connected, the Commissioners had had given to them the names of several gentlemen as bribers who certainly had nothing at all to do with bribery. There were as many as 97 electors scheduled in Gloucester, some of whom were absent from the city during the sittings of the Commission, while others had not had an opportunity of being heard before the Commissioners and of stating that they had nothing whatever to do with bribery. In one case especially, a most respectable man, an *employé* in the Post Office, attended before the Commissioners, was examined by them, and was exonerated by them from the charge which had been brought against him; yet through inadvertence his name was inserted in the Schedule. This gentleman's name having appeared as having received a bribe, the voter would be disfranchised for life. As he (Mr. Monk) had said, the Commissioners had acknowledged that this gentleman was not guilty; but the case was very difficult to deal with, for, after the Commission was dissolved, the Secretary stated, in reply to representations made to him with regard to this case, that there was no power to remove any name from the Schedule after the Commissioners had presented their Report. And this was no solitary case. There were many cases of the same nature. Another case was that of a highly respectable medical practitioner in the city. This gentleman's name was also returned as that of a person who had received a bribe, and it was needless to say that there was not a word of truth in the statement. There was another point to which he wished to call the attention of the Committee, and that was this—that if the clause passed in its present state, disqualifying voters for life, any one of these voters might come forward at the next General Election as a candidate, and would be perfectly qualified to be returned as the Representative of the borough in which he had been scheduled as a briber. Though that was an improbable case, yet the fact remained the same; and he believed that, in some cases, the fact of a man's name having been scheduled would not be considered as a disqualification for being returned to Parliament. Now, his right hon. Friend (Mr. Raikes) had proposed that, instead of a disqualification for life, these scheduled voters should be disfranchised for seven years, which was the penalty inflicted by the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act of 1883. He wished to point out that the electors who attended before the Commissioners and were subsequently scheduled, had no opportunity of bringing evidence before the Commissioners to show that they had not been guilty of these practices. Under the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, no one could

be convicted who had not been fairly tried; and, on their trial, accused persons could retain counsel, and bring forward evidence to show that they had not been guilty of these practices. He thought there was a strong reason why the same punishment should not be inflicted on those who had been examined before the Commissioners on the faith of a certificate of indemnity being given to them if they spoke the truth. In that case, of course, the voters had not had the aid of counsel. There was another point in which he was sure he should be confirmed by his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General when he rose to reply, and that was that in the case of some of these boroughs the inquiry on the part of the Commissioners had been of a most exhaustive nature; and he was sorry to say that they would find that as many as 1,500 or 2,000, and even more, voters had in consequence been scheduled. But in the case of more than one borough the inquiry was of a most perfunctory character. He was sorry to have to mention names, but he must mention the name of one borough, and that was the City of Oxford. The Commissioners said on page 16 of their Report—

"It is unnecessary to observe that Schedules II. and IV. do not by any means purport to contain the names of all who, under colour of payment for employment, received money for their votes.

"So far as the employer is concerned, it is comparatively easy to detect bribery under colour of payment for services; but when the inquiry is directed to the motives and knowledge of a voter who has been employed, it is difficult to decide whether he has accepted the employment with a corrupt intent. We, therefore, did not pursue this inquiry further than was necessary for verifying the accounts laid before us by the several district agents, for testing the particulars filed in support of the Petition, and for forming an approximate estimate of the number of persons employed."

Would the Committee bear with him when he told them the result? The result was that the Oxford Commissioners scheduled 84 persons as bribers. How many were scheduled as bribees? In the Report it was intimated that more than 1,000 voters had received payment for their votes, but only 55 were scheduled as having been bribed. Of course, in those cases where they found 1,200, 1,500, or even 1,900 persons scheduled as having been bribed, the Commissioners had gone down into the borough for several weeks and had made a most full and careful inquiry into all the circumstances of the case. His right hon. Friend Mr. Raikes) had, he thought, alluded to the case of Norwich—the election of 1875. In 1876 the Commissioners presented their Report in regard to that election. On page 29 the Commissioners said—

"When we had ascertained, from the evidence of numerous witnesses whose examination extended over a considerable period, that a corrupt, systematic, and extensive employment of a large number of voters had been resorted to at the last two elections (1874 and 1875) by the various agents of both Parties, it became necessary to consider to what further extent, if any, it was our duty to prosecute the inquiry. Upon this subject we regretted not to have the concurrence of our late colleague, Mr M'Mahon. He thought, notwithstanding the extent and cogency of the evidence already obtained (as to the effect of which, and the political responsibility of the constituency in respect of it, he fully agreed with us), that the Statute was peremptory, and left us no discretion in the matter; that it was, therefore, obligatory upon us to examine without exception all the persons employed at the said election, and to report to Your Majesty their names, if we should find them guilty of a violation of the law.

"In this view, however, after full consideration, we were not able to concur. It was our opinion that under Your Majesty's commission we were at liberty to direct the course and scope of the inquiry, and that the Statute did not imperatively require us in any event, and contrary to our judgment of the expediency of the case, to submit to examination 4,000 or 5,000 additional witnesses for the purpose of ascertaining their individual responsibility.

"Having regard, therefore, to these considerations, to the serious difficulties and objections that existed to the examination of a few, only, as a sample of so large a body; to the extent and importance of the information before us, and believing that no benefit could be obtained, commensurate with the vast expenditure of time and money which would be involved in the course proposed by our learned colleague, we concluded that it was our duty to dispense with the proposed examinations, and to present this Report without such evidence."

The consequence was, that although 4,000 or 5,000 voters might have been bribed, there were only 56 bribers and 29 bribees scheduled in 1875. Now, no doubt his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, whether he considered it was the duty of the Commissioners to make an exhaustive inquiry or not, knew that there were other cases in which the inquiry was, as he had said, of a perfunctory nature; and therefore the point which he wished to bring particularly before the attention of the Committee and the Government

was this—that in the cases where there was an exhaustive inquiry they had the names in the Schedules of every person who had received a bribe; whereas, in other cases, they had only the names of some 29 or 55. After that, he thought it would be a very great hardship if the persons who were induced to give this evidence, admitting their complicity in illegal acts, were for ever deprived of their votes; whereas, a much larger number who were equally guilty, were allowed to go free. There was a further reason why he could not offer his support to the Amendment of his right hon. Friend the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes). He thought this was a case in which, after the passing of so stringent a measure as the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, the two Houses of Parliament might very well overlook the offences committed in 1880 in boroughs which had already suffered a certain amount of punishment. With two exceptions, all the towns where corrupt practices had occurred had been deprived of their representation during the present Parliament; and on behalf of his own and other constituencies he would urge that this was a case in which Parliament might well afford to exhibit its leniency.

MR. H. TOLLEMACHE said, he thought it would be generally admitted that the Bill, as drawn by the Government, was so monstrously unjust that that House would not for a moment consent to pass it. He did not for a moment think it would be contended that the punishment of disfranchisement for life of scheduled voters ought to be adhered to. But, if that was so, then came the question as to what ought to be the punishment in these cases. For his own part, he considered that half a loaf was better than no bread; and therefore he was prepared to accept the Amendment prescribing seven years' disfranchisement, unless the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill would tell them that the Government would consent to abandon the clause altogether. In his opinion, a great many people had been unnecessarily scheduled. He understood that treating was not a corrupt practice at all, under any Act which existed at that time; and therefore the Commissioners ought not to have scheduled those persons who had merely been guilty of treating. There were many reasons also why some of the persons who were scheduled should be let off altogether, and the first was that they had not had an opportunity of being heard in their own defence; and it was laid down by the Act of 1854, and re-enacted in the Act of 1883, that persons should only be found guilty of corrupt practices after they had had an opportunity of being heard. Lord Blackburn had laid it down in the Bewdley Election Petition Inquiry—

"That a person giving evidence upon the hearing of an Election Petition has not had an opportunity of being heard in a legal sense, and, therefore, unless he was tried and convicted before a jury, disqualification did not attach."

And he would venture to suggest to the Committee that those individuals who had been brought up before the Election Commissioners had not had an opportunity of being heard in the sense laid down by Lord Blackburn. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Raikes) had pointed out that in the case of Norwich that House did disqualify those persons who had been scheduled by a special measure, although it was not necessary by the law at that time; but, for his part, he considered that the decision of Lord Blackburn was a much wiser one than that of that House. But he would give a higher authority than even Lord Blackburn. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, speaking on April 5, 1881, of the Taunton Election Petition, said—

"There are certain disqualifications attaching to candidates in consequence of being reported personally guilty of bribery by an Election Judge. These disqualifications are imposed by 31 & 32 *Vict.* c. 125, s. 43; but no disqualification of any kind attaches to any person so reported other than a candidate except the prohibition of his employment as an election agent during seven years. The reason for this is to be found in the wording of the 45th section of the Act I have mentioned, which says: 'Any person other than a candidate found guilty in any proceeding in which, after notice of the charge, he has had an opportunity of being heard,' shall be subjected to certain disqualifications. It has been determined by Lord Blackburn, in the decision given by him in the Bewdley Petition case—and it seems to me quite correctly determined—that a person giving evidence upon the hearing of an Election Petition has not had 'an opportunity of being heard' in the legal sense, and that, therefore, unless tried and convicted before a jury, the disqualifications do not attach. The same rule applies with greater force in relation to the Reports of Commissioners, for even candidates are subjected to no penalties or disqualifications in consequence of being reported by Commis-

sioners as personally guilty of bribery. The result is that unless persons be prosecuted and convicted, which they cannot be in the face of a certificate of indemnity, no consequences of any kind result directly to anyone from being reported guilty of corrupt practices by Election Commissioners."—(3 *Hansard*, [260] 760.)

The hon. and learned Gentleman laid down there that no consequences of any kind resulted to anyone from being reported guilty of corrupt practices by Election Commissioners.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the hon. Member had omitted the word "directly."

MR. H. TOLLEMACHE could not say what the hon. and learned Gentleman meant by the word "directly;" but it certainly seemed to him to be "direct" punishment to disfranchise those people for life. If those persons had had an opportunity of explaining their conduct by counsel, he believed that hundreds and hundreds of them would not have been scheduled. They in that House had had an opportunity of clearing their characters by the Act of 1883. They had, so to speak, held themselves up as paragons of electoral purity; they had called heaven and earth to witness that they were not as other men were; and he thought that now they could extend to those innocent persons that measure of generosity which they had claimed for themselves. He admitted that there were many people who would not have been unfairly treated by the punishment which appeared in the Government Bill; but, after this lapse of time, he did not think it was possible to discriminate between the different offences of which these people had been guilty; and it would be well that the first principle of the English law should be applied to this case—namely, that it was better that the few guilty should get off than that the many who were innocent should suffer. What was their crime after all? It was not a serious one. Their real crime was that of being found out. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had left the House; but he remembered that the hon. and learned Gentleman, who spoke with great authority on all these subjects, distinctly told the House that all boroughs were more or less corrupt. He had told them, in regard to the case of Knaresborough, that he believed that if inquiries were made in all cases, no borough would come out purer than Knaresborough. Well, there were about 10 per cent of the electors of Knaresborough scheduled; and if Knaresborough was, comparatively speaking, so pure, he did not think he was going too far in saying that it was not a very serious offence which had been committed. Those individuals had been hardly dealt with by being disfranchised for life; and he put it to the Committee, as a matter of justice, that those people who had not had an opportunity of explaining their conduct should be replaced on the Register. He would like to support a proposal for striking out this clause altogether; but, failing that, he should certainly support the Amendment before the Committee to limit the disfranchisement to seven years.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD would tell the Committee, in one word, what made him place a similar Amendment to the one under discussion on the Paper. When the words "for ever" came up in the Parliamentary Elections Corrupt and Illegal Practices, Bill, he had willingly joined some of his hon. Friends in endeavouring to get them struck out, because he held very strongly indeed that those words ought not to find a place in any Act of Parliament. He did not agree with his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk), or the hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for West Cheshire (Mr. H. Tollemache), that this was an occasion to make light of those offences. He could only say that if the prayer which had been addressed to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General were listened to, the electors of other places would have very good reason to complain. He thought, for example, that there would be inequality of treatment in the case of places like Totnes, where the scheduled electors had been disfranchised by the Act of 1867, and had remained so for 18 years, and whom by another clause it was proposed to disfranchise perpetually. He had refrained from placing on the Paper any suggestion of his own as to the punishment which ought to be awarded; but he did hope that the Committee would not take any course which might lead to the conclusion that they regarded this matter lightly.

MR. MONK desired to say, as a matter of personal explanation, that he was

the last man in the House to regard these matters with levity.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) pointed out that the Government had already stated that this clause had been arrived at after consideration; but they desired to know what was the feeling of the Committee on the subject, and to leave the decision of the matter in their hands. The Government had no desire to act with any undue harshness or with any undue severity, and wished to know what was the general feeling of the Committee. Perhaps the Committee would allow him to remind them of what was the usual course in these matters. The hon. Member for West Cheshire (Mr. H. Tollemache) had stated very clearly that until the passing of the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, no penal consequences attached to a person found guilty by admission of corruption, and therefore the Legislature had always dealt with each case individually. Hitherto legislation had never been tempered by those considerations which had been urged on the Committee that night by his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk), and which had never been urged in the House before, although the considerations urged had existed before all the Reports were made by the Commissioners. The legislation which had been passed on this question had always had a certain stated purpose, and that was to check the continuance of corrupt practices. Two rules had been invariably followed, notwithstanding what had been said against that mode of procedure. Persons so scheduled had either been prevented from voting in the particular constituency in which they had their qualification, for life, or from voting anywhere, wherever they might move to, for seven years. There was one notable example of this. That was contained in the Representation of the People Act, 1867, which was not, as some of these measures were, an Act for the particular purpose of dealing with these persons. Full attention had been called to the question of corrupt practices. There were four boroughs dealt with. The electors in those boroughs would have been entitled to vote in the counties in which the boroughs were; but, under the Act of 1867, they were disfranchised for life from voting in the county districts in which the boroughs had been merged. He thought that, at the time, that was the legislation of general acquiescence. Under these circumstances, he hoped it would not be attributed to the Government that in drawing up this Bill they adopted a severe course. They had thought that it would be better to follow the precedents, and then to deal with the matter as the Committee might think fit. Inasmuch as they reframed the old Act of 1867 in this Bill, it occurred to them that it would be inconsistent if they made any other rule than the one they had done. They had to approach the question that night, no doubt, with some different considerations. For instance, he was sorry to say that they had to deal with a far different number of offenders than they had to deal with formerly. They had to deal with upwards of 9,000 persons who had been scheduled. It might be argued, in consequence of the large number of persons scheduled, that a greater amount of leniency should be shown them than if they were few; but he thought it might also be said that the greater the amount of the offence the less the punishment on the constituency. From all the Reports which had been received, and judging from the proceedings at recent bye-elections, there seemed to be amongst those who had hitherto had the conduct of electoral contests an earnest desire to produce, if they could, a different and a better state of things. Under such circumstances, the question arose whether the Committee would give effect to the hopes thus created, and impose a mitigated penalty? If it should seem right to the Committee to accept the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), and thus limit the punishment to seven years, the Government would offer no objection.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE rose for one moment to express his personal satisfaction at the statement that had been made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. It appeared to him that they had to consider the character of those who were now about to be admitted to the franchise. Considering what a very large addition had been made to the electoral roll, and considering that many of the new voters had not been trained to look upon the possession of the right or privi-

lege of voting as a matter of trust, it was very important that at the outset of the new state of things the new electors should have before them the distinct warning that the corrupt practices of old times were at an end, and it would be impolitic to make them believe that all the sentences of the past were entirely wiped out. On the other hand, he thought the general feeling of the Committee was that it was not desirable, if they could avoid it, of keeping up perpetual punishment. Useful warning had been given as to the future, and he thought by accepting the moderate proposal of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Raikes) the Government really met the exigencies of the case.

MR. CLARE READ called the attention of the Attorney General to the fact that there were some Acts still in operation for the disfranchisement of voters. He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would introduce words to embrace the repeal of those Acts. His hon. Friend the Member for Norwich (Mr. Colman) would bear him out when he said that in 1870 there was a special Act passed for the disfranchisement of certain voters in that city. An Act for the disfranchisement of voters was also passed in 1871. Now, those Acts disfranchised voters for life, whereas the Act passed in 1876 only disfranchised voters for seven years. He hoped the Attorney General would take care that these Acts were repealed.

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. RAIKES moved to insert, after the word "incapable," in line 17, "during the period of seven years after the presentation of."

Amendment proposed, in page 10, line 17, after the word "incapable," to insert the words "during the period of seven years after the presentation of." —(*Mr. Raikes.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

MR. THOROLD ROGERS proposed, in page 10, line 25, after sub-section (b.), to insert the words—

"(c.) Of being a candidate for any borough or division of a county in the United Kingdom."

The hon. Member said, he hoped that all the expressions of sympathy and kindly feeling for the illiterate voter, for the poor man, who was bribed by a pint of beer, or by a sum of money up to three sovereigns—that being the range of bribery as far as experience went—had not been thrown away, and that the Committee had exercised a generous consideration for parties who had been more tempted than tempters. But he thought that to include the name of a person who had been proved to be guilty of bribing a constituency in the list of scheduled voters, and then to enable the man to sit in Parliament for any constituency, was as great a farce as the House could be capable of enacting. In the case of one constituency completely disfranchised, it was perfectly clear that one person was guilty of the most widespread, deliberate, and elaborate bribery. The borough to which he referred was, he was persuaded, well known to the Committee. The gentleman to whom he referred had been described as "an agent of great experience and success;" he had recently succeeded, it was said, in returning certain Conservatives for one borough and certain Conservative Members for another borough. Hon. Members knew what the success of the man meant with regard to one of the constituencies—a constituency which had been described as the centre of the wealth of England. In the second constituency there was a large body of poor voters, and matters were so manipulated that, apparently through the agency of this person, all the electors who were susceptible to bribes received them. What was the course the man adopted? He first of all declared that he had nothing to do with bribery; next, he instructed his sub-agents to declare or swear that they were not guilty of bribery; and then he went before the Commissioners and attempted to adopt the same plan. At last he got alarmed, went into the witness-box, declared he had bribed wholesale, and then, of course, as before, snapped his fingers in the face of the Commissioners. Why the Commissioners allowed the man to get into the box and make a clear breast of his doings, he (Mr. Thorold Rogers) could not understand. It would have been quite possible for them to have got evidence against him, and then to have brought him to book. It seemed to him (Mr. Thorold Rogers) that if they were to punish persons who were guilty of accepting bribes, they should *a fortiori* punish the persons who had

been guilty of bribing. He believed that hitherto the practice had been to disqualify a candidate from sitting during the existence of the then Parliament for the constituency in which he was convicted; but at present there seemed to be no means of punishing an agent except by declaring that for seven years after the presentation of the Report of the Commissioners an agent guilty of malpractices should be debarred from sitting in the House. He confessed that in a case so flagrant, so obvious, and so scandalous as the one he had referred to—and there were others of a like nature—a punishment such as even what he proposed was wholly inadequate. The Committee were aware that if legal perjury was proved against a Member, and there had been such instances in the history of the House of Commons—he did not recollect the number of cases, but there was an instance in 1787—the Member was immediately expelled. He thought that the common sense of the House ought to be strong enough to declare that if a person had not been legally convicted of perjury, but morally convicted, he should be prevented from sitting in their midst. The man to whom he had referred was practically exempted from the consequences of his own admissions, because the practice of giving an indemnity relieved him from those consequences; but he (Mr. Thorold Rogers) did not think the House as a Court—if he might say so, as a Court of Honour—ought to ignore such practices committed by agents at elections, but should visit them with very severe punishment. He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

In page 10, line 25, after sub-section (b.), to insert the words,—" (c.) Of being a candidate for any borough or division of a county in the United Kingdom."—(*Mr. Thorold Rogers.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he was sorry the Amendment had been defended by the hon. Member who proposed it simply by a reference to one individual case. The hon. Gentleman had used one word, at all events, with reference to that case which would scarcely be justified if the matter were fully gone into. He (Mr. E. Clarke) did not think there was any question of perjury in the case to which the hon. Member referred, or anything approaching perjury; but he, at the same time, cordially agreed with the hon. Gentleman in the Amendment he had moved. He should be very happy to vote with the hon. Gentleman if he pressed the Amendment to a division. He could not imagine they were justified in saying that voters should be precluded for seven years from the power of voting for Members of Parliament in consequence of having been scheduled, and that one of the persons who had been guilty of bribing should have the right to stand as a candidate for Parliamentary honours. He hoped the Amendment would be accepted by the Committee.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he did not wish to dwell too much upon the particular case which had been cited, though he agreed with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) that it was one of the worst cases it was possible to conceive in the annals of their electoral system. The person hinted at bribed 1,100 persons, then went before the Judges who tried the Election Petition and swore there was no bribery, allowed other persons to make the same statement, and then went into the witness-box, and, under cover of the indemnity, disclosed the whole system of bribery that had been employed and the names of his confederates, against whom he subsequently appeared to give evidence. But, after all, he (the Attorney General) did not think Parliament ought to be guided in legislation by one particular case. This Parliament had imposed new penalties for corrupt practices at elections. The facts of this case occurred in 1881, and they were known to everybody who took part in the discussions on the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, and, whilst the case was mentioned, the House did not then by general legislation dare to make the penalties retrospective. He thought it would be unjust to do so now. Much as he sympathized with his hon. Friend (Mr. Thorold Rogers), much as he should regret to see Parliamentary honours bestowed upon a person who had acted as the person to whom reference had been made acted, he thought the safer course to pursue, both as a matter of precedent and as a matter of

justice, was not to introduce legislation of a retrospective character. Such a precedent might lead to great evil. To his mind, it would be a very evil precedent to impose one day a retrospective penalty for a crime committed the previous day. Although he was in sympathy with the object of his hon. Friend (Mr. Thorold Rogers), he must look at the matter in a broad spirit. When he did that, he did not think any good purpose would be served by making the penalty retrospective.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 77; Noes 90: Majority 13.—(Div. List, No. 60.)

MR. WARTON proposed to insert, at end of line 28, page 10—

"As if the disqualification of such person had arisen after the commencement of the said Act."

He pointed out that in the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act there were the words—

"By reason of having after the commencement of this Act been found guilty,"

and so on. They had already disqualified certain persons by the Amendment just carried; but they had not disqualified them for ever, but for a period of seven years from the Report of the Judges or Commissioners in 1880. It was perfectly clear that when the corrupt practices took place in 1880, they did not take place after the commencement of the Act of 1883, and he was inclined to think that some of the guilty might escape unless steps were now taken to guard against their escape. It was to guard against that that he moved this Amendment. He would call the attention of the Attorney General to an effect which might be produced by the application of this section. If they looked at all to the machinery they would find that the persons who were to be included in this proposal would have the same right of being heard and of showing cause. Had they a right to be heard as to the particulars of the case?

Amendment proposed,

In page 10, at end of line 28, to insert the words "As if the disqualification of such person had arisen after the commencement of the said Act."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES said, he was sorry that he had very imperfectly heard the observations which had fallen from the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Warton). It appeared to him, however, that the point raised was of a very technical nature, and as the Amendment was not on the Paper he was unable to express any opinion upon it. If the hon. and learned Member would be good enough to send it to him in writing, as he had described it as one of the greatest importance and which ought to be accepted, he the Attorney General) would bestow upon it that attention which it deserved.

MR. WARTON: On that understanding, I will withdraw the Amendment for the present.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 27, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

MR. H. TOLLEMACHE said, he wished to make one more appeal to the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill. He regretted that several hon. Members, who unquestionably would have given their support to the change he wished to bring about in the Bill, had they been present, and who ought to have been in their places, were not now in attendance. He would not go into all the questions he had raised in his speech a while ago; but he would draw the attention of the Attorney General to just one question which he had omitted to answer. He wished to know whether the Commissioners who were appointed to inquire as to the existence or prevalence of corrupt practices at elections in 1880, had power to inquire into practices which were not corrupt until 1883? Scores of people had been found guilty of treating and of being treated during the General Election of 1880; but in that year these things were not corrupt practices. He should like also to draw attention to another point. He did not wish to argue this question from a local point of view; but, in the case of Chester alone, there were a great many individuals scheduled for being treated. He thought he was right in saying that all the Commissioners, except those who inquired into the Chester case, had not mentioned in their Reports cases of individuals being treated. In the case of

Macclesfield, the Commissioners stated at the head of their Report that no person who had been treated had been scheduled. He would ask, therefore, whether it was fair for the few hundred people in Chester who had been scheduled for having been treated to be disqualified for even seven years, when other people in similar cases had not been so treated? There was just one other point which he had forgotten to mention—namely, that all the Commissioners in holding their Courts of Inquiry had stated that no further proceedings, either criminal or civil, would be taken against any person who made a clean breast of the matter; and on the faith of that assurance very many persons had come forward and confessed to electoral offences. He hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would answer his case about the scheduling of the people who had been treated in Chester, and nowhere else. If he got any support, he should ask the Committee to divide upon the question of expunging this clause.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he could hardly think the hon. Member was in earnest in asking the Committee to expunge this clause, seeing that the Amendment which he moved just now had been taken as a settlement of the question. ["No, no!"] Well, then, why did not the hon. Member divide against his Amendment? As to treating and being treated, there could be no doubt that they were corrupt practices even prior to 1880. The hon. Member was quite mistaken in supposing that a person guilty of either of these offences escaped all punishment. He lost his vote thereby. If some of the Commissioners had performed their duty zealously, had made an exhaustive inquiry, and had scheduled all persons guilty of treating or of having been treated, it was not a fair plea to say that, because other Commissioners had not done so, therefore the persons scheduled, in the first instance, should escape the consequences of their illegal action. That would be a very dangerous principle to lay down.

Motion *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 26 (Adaptation of certain enactments as to disqualification of voters for corrupt practices).

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, it was necessary for him now to draw the attention of the Committee to the position in which they stood with regard to this clause. He presumed that in the opinion of hon. Members this section would now require some alteration. He presumed it would apply to the boroughs of Bridgwater and Beverley, and the other four boroughs he had already mentioned, and, to be consistent, the Committee would not desire to re-enact a light punishment for these. It only affected six boroughs, because the framers of the Bill had only to deal with the boroughs which were in the counties, and which were now in the divisions of the counties. There were other boroughs which would have to be dealt with—for instance, Norwich—which did not require to be dealt with in this clause. A clause should, he thought, be brought up in respect to Norwich on the Report. So as to make the Bill consistent, this clause should be reframed, and he therefore hoped the Committee would allow it to be struck out.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that before any of the new clauses were introduced at the suggestion of private Members, he would ask the Government to bring up the Notes to the Schedules in the form of a new clause. Taking the form of the Bill as it stood, it seemed to him that this mode of drawing up an Act of Parliament was perfectly novel. He could not help thinking it wrong, and, with all due respect to the draftsmen, he was confident that it would be more consonant with previous legislation if what were called "Notes to the Schedules" were introduced as a new clause, in order that they could be properly enacted, and would not stand as a hybrid subject, so that no one would understand what they were. He appealed to the Government to accept the suggestion he made, and bring up these Notes as a new clause. No doubt, some of the wording would have to be altered if that were done.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that the Committee should be allowed to go through private Members' clauses. When they were disposed of—and he was very doubtful whether any of them would be added to the Bill—he should then be happy to follow the

advice tendered to him, and to move that the Notes to the Schedules be formed into a new clause. He might say that personally he had favoured the course now proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, but that he had been overruled by the draftsmen, who informed him that the manner in which the Notes were inserted was the best form to adopt. The draftsmen, at the same time, had assured him that there were many precedents for the course pursued.

Mr. WARTON said, they had already passed, in Clause 22, words to the effect that the Notes should be construed as part of the Act. If the course proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) were adopted, it was obvious that Clause 22 would have to be altered.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: That will have to be left out.

Mr. AGNEW said, he wished, in page 3, after Clause 9, to move the insertion of a clause declaring that—

"At a general parliamentary election the polls (if any) for the divisions in a divided county shall be taken on the same day, such day to be fixed by the returning officer of the county."

The Committee was, no doubt, aware that already provision had been made in the case of divided boroughs that the Returning Officer should be required to order the elections to take place on the same day. The object of the clause for which he now respectfully ventured to ask the favour of the Committee for was to apply the same principle to divided counties. It appeared to him that if the principle was good in the one case it must be good in the other. They had passed a Corrupt Practices Act within the life of the present Parliament, for one purpose, at least, that they might get a full, free, and an honest expression of the people's will at the poll; and he contended that if a system of one-day elections were so partially adopted as was involved within the terms of the clause he now proposed, the Committee would have done much to promote the orderly conduct of elections, and to prevent the improper conduct which was so frequently seen in the constituencies all over the country at election times. It might be said that there were difficulties in the way of carrying out the plan he advocated. He ventured to anticipate one objection which might be made. Probably it would be said that it would be difficult for the Returning Officer — the High Sheriff of the county — to find a staff of officials sufficiently numerous to conduct the elections in all county divisions on one day. Well, he would remind the Committee, and those Members especially who sat for large boroughs and constituencies, that in some towns in this country—in one 18, in another 19, and in another, he believed, 20—ward elections were contested, or might be contested, on a given day—on the 1st of November. He could not for a moment suppose that there would be any more difficulty on the part of the Sheriff or the Returning Officer of a county in providing facilities for General Elections, than it was for those provided by a High Bailiff or the Mayor of a borough for taking municipal elections on the 1st of November. He was certainly of opinion, in the interests of order and of general good conduct, which, unhappily, had not always been apparent at Parliamentary elections, that if elections were conducted all over the country on one and the same day, it would be a very good thing for the public; and he had placed an Amendment on the Paper with the object of asking the Committee to consider that larger portion of the question. He did not, however, intend on this occasion to move that Amendment, because he knew that practically it would be impossible to obtain for it that acceptance which he thought it deserved; but he did hope that there were in the Committee those who would join with him in supporting the Motion which he now made—namely, that this new clause should be added to the Bill; and, certainly, if he had any support at all, he should take a division upon the point. Many hon. Members knew that he was a thoroughly loyal Party man; but he, nevertheless, felt himself considerably inconvenienced by what was popularly known as "The Compact." Yet the Motion he now made, he ventured to assert, favoured neither Party. It was just as much to the interests of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to support it. ["No, no!"] At any rate, while he believed those Gentleman to be just as honest as he claimed to be himself, he believed it to be in their interests, as it was in the

interests of hon. Members who sat on his side of the House, that the elections in divided counties should take place on one and the same day. It was within his experience—no; he withdrew that word, because he had no practical or personal knowledge of such things, but he had heard of a case in a borough in his own county. In a certain town, an election took place in 1880. On the following day an election took place in another town, and to that town from the town in which the first election had taken place, 200 men were drafted to take part in the electoral business—that was to say, 200 men were drafted from A to help the citizens of B to record their votes. Again, he knew a case where a political committee in a borough, which he would call C, had not scrupled to get from B, where an election had taken place on the previous day, from 80 to 100 carriages to help the free and independent electors to record their votes. These were practices that the House had in effect condemned when it passed the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal) Practices Act. If the Committee would agree to the clause he took the liberty of proposing, he believed they would be still further endorsing the expression they had given in that Act of their determination, so far as possible, to minimize and limit these extraneous and corrupting influences. He trusted that the Committee would pardon him—a Member who did not too frequently, or, indeed, very frequently, intrude himself on their attention—for having brought this subject forward; and he hoped that, however seldom they heard him speak, they would none the less accord to the proposal which he ventured to make at least a careful attention. He begged to move the clause which stood in his name.

New Clause:—

(Polls in divided counties.)

"At a general parliamentary election the polls (if any) for the divisions in a divided county shall be taken on the same day, such day to be fixed by the returning officer of the county,"—(*Mr. Agnew.*)

brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he thought it was very possible that, sooner or later, some action would have to be taken in the direction indicated by the clause; but at the present moment, when Parliament was throwing on the Sheriffs of counties considerably increased duties, he very much doubted whether it would be wise for the Committee to run the risk which they would run if, as in the case of Lancashire, the conduct of two or three elections would rest upon the shoulders of one Sheriff by the acceptance of this proposal. He thought the acceptance of the clause would strain the powers of the Local Authorities almost as greatly as the acceptance of the proposal which was in the name of the hon. Member lower down on the Paper, to the effect that all elections at every General Election in the United Kingdom should be held on one and the same day. Looking at the great difficulties in the way of the working of the new Franchise Act and of the new Registration Act in every case, he was afraid of doing anything which would add to those difficulties, and which might possibly lead to a breakdown. It was on this ground, more than on general grounds of principle, that he would appeal to the Committee not to accept the clause.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said, that if he might be allowed to make a few remarks on this subject, he would say that he thought the objection taken by the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board was really hardly sufficient, because, after all, by the very Bill which they were now about to pass, by Clauses 11 and 12, the Returning Officer had power to depute his duties in several parts of the divisions to his Deputies, who were to be paid according to a certain scale, and were practically to be responsible for the election. Though it might be said that the Sheriff was to be responsible for them, they would each, in their own part of the county, have to carry out the duties of the election itself, and undertake all the responsibilities. Therefore, he thought that, so far as the Sheriff was concerned, the adoption of the proposal would not throw additional work on his shoulders, or, at any rate, would not throw responsibilities upon him which he could not undertake. If that objection did not hold, he thought there were some very strong advantages which would spring from the adoption of this

proposal. In the first place, it appeared to him to be too much lost sight of that the Returning Officer was an official, and that it ought to be absolutely out of his power in any way to influence the election. It was notorious, however, that the dates of elections at present were constantly fixed by Returning Officers in a manner and on a day that they believed would tend to the advantage of the Party to which they belonged, and put to disadvantage the Party to which they did not belong. If anyone would take the trouble to look at the dates on which the different elections in the different portions of the counties took place in 1880, he would see that it must have been largely personal influence which had caused particular dates to be chosen, and that such a system could not possess the confidence of the electors themselves. To give an instance of the evil to which he alluded, he found that in 1880, in the county of Cheshire, in which there were three divisions, in one division the Returning Officer fixed the nomination day on the 2nd of April, and the polling day on the 3rd. In another division he fixed the nomination day on the 5th of April, and the polling to take place on the 9th, which was a difference of four days; and in the third division he fixed the nomination day on the 6th, and the polling to take place on the 13th, or a difference of seven days. It must have been some personal influence which caused that enormous discrepancy between the nomination day and the day of polling, and he did not think it could be said that the arrangement had been quite legitimate, and without bias or influence. Then, again, they had now passed the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act, which had fixed a maximum scale of expenditure for elections; and a fixed amount should surely involve a definite time for the period of election. In some cases, by the action of the Returning Officer, the election might be spread, as occurred in some cases in 1880, over a period of a fortnight; while in other cases only a single day might be allowed in which it could take place. He thought that Parliament having passed the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Act was a very strong argument for fixing—he would not say the poll to take place on the same day throughout the country, though he should be in favour of such an arrangement as that—but the poll to take place on the same day in the various divisions of a county. There were several matters in regard to conveyance, bribery, &c., which were arguments in favour of the proposal; but he did not wish to detain the Committee, and, therefore, would allow them to pass. It seemed to him that the only possible objection which could be taken to this proposal was that the Returning Officers would have too much to do; but, as he had suggested, that difficulty could be got over by appointing an efficient Returning Officer for each division, and seeing that they did their duties.

MR. GRANTHAM said, he was afraid that the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken knew very little of the practical effect of the Amendment he proposed. He had said that the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board could take no practical objection to the clause; but, as a matter of fact, the difficulty would be in working out the principle of the clause in practice. Those who knew anything about the working of county elections must know that it was almost impossible for the various County Sheriffs at present to carry out the duties which Parliament had imposed upon them, without being considerably out of pocket by so doing. The hon. Gentleman had forgotten that, in all these cases, the Sheriff did not know until the day of the nomination whether there was to be a contest or not. This difficulty existed in many counties. In some cases, no doubt, it was known whether or not contests were to take place; but in others it was not known until the certain period allowed by Parliament had passed; and it was, therefore, impossible for the Sheriff to make his arrangements within a day or two of the election, when all at once a contest was sprung upon him. The right hon. Baronet who had the management of the Bill knew the difficulty there was at the present time in the way of Sheriffs obtaining their Deputies. They were named in the Act of Parliament as if it were easy to get them; but he would remind the hon. Member that they were only allowed three guineas, and that for this remuneration they had to give up sometimes two days and three nights to the work. The proposal was

an impracticable one, and he was quite sure the Committee would do right in refusing to read it a second time.

MR. LEAKE said, he did not understand the objection of the hon. and learned Member for East Surrey (Mr. Grantham), because it was well known that the Sheriff, or other Returning Officer, could find as many Deputy Returning Officers as were required. At present, under the redistribution scheme of the Government, it would be necessary for the Returning Officer to find several Deputies in a place like Manchester. He admitted the difficulty pointed out by the Government. They were on the eve of a very great change, and no doubt it was as well that the difficulties which would have to be faced in connection with the extended franchise and the redistribution scheme should be minimized as much as possible; but he failed to see what greater difficulty there could be than this—that was to say, to have in such a place as the South-Eastern Division of Lancashire, eight consecutive elections on eight consecutive days. Anyone who knew the excitement of electioneering could well understand what a rush there would be of the electors from one division in which the work of polling had just finished to another in which it was just commencing. Anyone who had had practical experience of elections, and who understood what this difficulty was and was likely to be under the new Bill, would without doubt do all in his power to endeavour to remove it. Formerly, there was a 14 days' poll, which, however, gave way, for the convenience of electors, first, to a two days' poll, and then from a two days' poll to a one day's poll. The tendency of legislation had been to simplify all proceedings connected with elections, and throughout the United Kingdom there would be very little difficulty in appointing the polling for the borough on one day, and that for the counties on another day. He certainly thought the proposition of his hon. Friend (Mr. Agnew) was well worth the consideration of those who occupied the two Front Benches, who had already done so much towards securing a settlement of these matters.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE said, the hon. Member (Mr. Sidney Buxton) had quoted a case of a division of the county of Cheshire, in which, as he had stated, the Returning Officer had fixed the 2nd of April as the nomination day, and the polling day on the 3rd. If the hon. Gentleman were accurate in his statement, he (Mr. Northcote) maintained that such a procedure was entirely contrary to the law, and he should like to ask the hon. Member whether he would state which division of the county of Cheshire he referred to?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON replied, that he was sorry he had not taken down the particular division to which he had referred; but he had obtained the information in the Library, and he should be very glad to supply it to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Northcote) afterwards.

SIR JOSEPH BAILEY opposed the clause, and said, that if the same Returning Officer were called upon to manage several elections on the same day, he could not see how, in some cases, especially in his own, it was possible that this could be done. He thought that such a consideration ought to decide the Committee against the adoption of the proposal contained in the Amendment.

MR. R. N. FOWLER said, there was one point to which he desired very briefly to call the attention of the Committee. At a General Election there were all sorts of local circumstances, of which the Sheriffs of counties were cognizant, that would render it exceedingly difficult to carry out the proposal involved in the Amendment. For instance, markets in different parts of the county were generally held on particular days, and if the Committee were to draw a hard-and-fast line, by fixing the election for the different divisions on the same day, it would be found that this would seriously interfere with the convenience of the electors by clashing very much with their market arrangements.

MR. ECROYD said, the hon. Members for South-East Lancashire, who had proposed and supported the Amendment, did not appear to appreciate the difference that existed between the two cases—of voting for boroughs, and voting for the divisions of counties. But the right of those who possessed property in different divisions to vote for that property had been recognized by the measure, and any attempt to hold the elections for all the divisions of such a county as Lancashire on the same day must necessarily disqualify a

large proportion of those who were thus entitled to vote. He would not take up the time of the Committee further; but it was important that they should understand what was the real meaning and motive of the Amendment before them. For his own part, he should certainly vote against the proposal of his hon. Friend.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 62; Noes 155: Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 61.)

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT, in rising to move the following Clause:—

"The number of Members of the House of Commons shall be fixed at six hundred and fifty-eight."

said, in proposing the clause of which he had given Notice, he desired briefly to state the reasons upon which he founded it.

MR. BUCHANAN rose to a point of Order, upon which he desired the ruling of the Chair. The House, he said, at an earlier stage of the measure, had negatived a Motion involving a similar proposition that had been brought forward by the hon. and gallant Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay), although in other words—namely, "It is inexpedient that the numbers of this House should be increased." He (Mr. Buchanan) wished to ask whether, after the House had negatived that proposition, it was competent for the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot) to raise the same question in a new clause in Committee?

MR. RAIKES asked whether the Chairman did not consider that the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay), to which the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) had just referred, did not materially differ from the clause now proposed by the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot), inasmuch as it was expressly intended to diminish the representation of Ireland and Wales, whereas the clause now before the Committee need not, if adopted, have any effect in such a direction? He therefore submitted, as a point worthy the consideration of the Chair, whether there was not a very material difference between the Amendment negatived on the proposal to go into Committee, and the clause now moved?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he remembered the Amendment moved by the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay), with the view of preventing an increase in the numbers of the House. That Amendment was negatived.

THE CHAIRMAN said, he would point out to the Committee that they were now in a different stage to that in which the decision referred to had been given. He must say, however, that he had had great doubt as to whether he could accept the Amendment submitted by the hon. Baronet (Sir Eardley Wilmot), as it appeared to him to be much more in the form of an abstract Resolution than of a new clause, and, to a certain extent, it seemed to be in contradiction of some of the decisions to which the Committee had already arrived. The hon. Baronet, in moving this as a new clause, ought to have stated the Schedule by which effect was to be given to it, and how he proposed to dispose of the number of Members so as to reduce them to 658. He (the Chairman) had not thought proper to stop the hon. Baronet, nor should he do so, if the hon. Baronet chose to go on after hearing this expression of his opinion.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, after the ruling just given by the Chairman of Committees, he would state the reasons that had induced him to propose the clause. He was quite aware of what had been done on a former occasion by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay), and he remembered that that proposal, being one that had a double effect involving two distinct propositions, he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had been prevented from giving his vote for it, as he could not vote for both proposals. Therefore, he had thought he should be in Order in moving the clause he had put upon the Paper. As he was allowed to proceed with his proposition, he would take the opportunity of offering a few observations in explanation of why he had brought it forward. He was not aware exactly how far he was acting in opposition to what they all understood to be the compact between the two Front Benches of that House in moving this new clause. He should be sorry to do anything that would appear to violate the solemn compact which had

hitherto bound hon. Members on that side of the House in a hard-and-fast bond in regard to this Redistribution Bill. He also begged to say that, in moving his new clause, he had no wish to say anything in opposition to what he considered to be the just claims of the Scotch Members to an addition of 12 Members to the present representation of Scotland. It was not his object in any way to prevent such an addition being made to the representation of North Britain. He would, therefore, state as briefly as possible what his object really was. He considered that the present constitution of the House, which had consisted of 658 Members throughout the whole of the present century, was quite sufficient to meet the requirements of the country. Last week, he had ventured, in addressing the House, to give it as his opinion that if they could have reduced the number of Members of that House to 600, they would have done much better than in accepting the proposal to increase their number to 670. At the beginning of the present century the number of Members of the House of Commons was, as he had already indicated, 658—namely, 513 for England and Wales, 45 for Scotland, and 100 for Ireland. Previous to that period the number had been 558; but at the time of the Act of Union an addition of 100 Members was made. When, in 1832, a new Reform Act was passed, they found that no alteration whatever was made in the number of Members constituting that assembly. Lord Grey added five Members to the Irish constituencies, and also increased the number of Scotch Members; but he retained the total number of 658—namely, 500 for England and Wales, 53 for Scotland, and 105 for Ireland. Proceeding further in the direction of Reform—and he only wished that, in the present Bill, Her Majesty's Government had followed the memorable Acts to which he had referred, as closely as the Conservative Government had followed the precedents before them—he found that under the Act passed during the Government of Mr. Disraeli, afterwards Lord Beaconsfield, the number of Members which had, up to that time, composed the House—namely, 658, was still retained. The number returned by Ireland was allowed to remain—105—as it had previously been; but 15 Members were added to Scotland, by which the number of Representatives for that portion of the United Kingdom was raised from 45 to 60, that addition being obtained by the sacrifice of a corresponding number of seats in England and Wales, the total number of English and Welsh seats being thereby reduced from 513 to 493, thus making a total for the Three Kingdoms of 658. The proposal of the present Bill went, however, on a totally different principle. It was now proposed that Ireland should have 103 Representatives, that the number in Scotland should be increased to 72, and that England and Wales should have 495, making, together, a total of 670. In order to arrive at a just appreciation of this question, he would ask the Committee to take into consideration the way in which the various other Representative Chambers in Europe and America were constituted. It would be found that, comparing the number of Representatives with the population, as well as with the number of registered electors, the amount of representation in the different European countries and in the United States was very much less than in the United Kingdom. He would, first of all, take the German Chamber. He found that in Germany there was a population of 45,324,161, and a total of upwards of 9,000,000 of electors, of whom, at the last General Election, upwards of 5,000,000 voted, while the number of Representatives returned to the Reichstag was 432, the number having been increased from 397 at the time the different States of Germany became united. Turning from Germany to France, he found the result of the comparison with this country pretty much the same. The French Chamber of Deputies, at which he had been present during some of the debates, was composed of only 537 Members, the population of the entire country amounting to 37,405,290, and the number of electors at the last General Election to upwards of 10,000,000. So that, with this enormous population, and under the system of universal suffrage which prevailed there under so large an electorate, the French people were content with 537 Representatives, as against 658—or, as was now proposed, 670—in the United Kingdom. The next example he would take was that of the United States, which, to the

Sir Eardley Wilmot

present occupants of the Treasury Bench, would appear to present such a wonderful model for imitation in the present measure. Up to the year 1870, there were only 293 Representatives in the Lower Chamber of the United States; but it was then increased to 395, at which number it now remained, which gave one Representative to every 104,325 of the population, which, in 1880, was nearly 50,000,000, while the number of electors who voted at the last Election of President was 10,500,000. At the Census of 1880 the population had actually increased in 30 years by 37,118,743. He quoted these examples for the purpose of showing that in all the other Chambers of Representatives, both in Europe and America—and he had with him, and could quote if necessary, similar statistics to those he had already given, for Belgium and Italy—the representation of the people was much smaller in proportion to population than it was in this country. This might not go for very much; but he had still another argument which, he thought, would weigh with hon. Members of that Committee; and it was that, whether as affecting the opportunities for speaking and transacting the general Business of that Assembly, or the question of finding places in a Chamber which was already too small to accommodate all its Members, the proposed addition to the number of Members would not add to the difficulties already experienced. It was true that 12 was not, in itself, a large number to add to the existing total; but if the principle of increasing the numerical composition of the House were once admitted, it would be very difficult on any future occasion to resist the appeals that might be anticipated from different boroughs in which the population increased, as no doubt it would, for an increase in the number of Representatives sent to that Chamber. Therefore, he submitted, the number of Members of that House ought not to be increased. He based his proposal on the various reasons he had urged with regard to the practice pursued in other countries, and especially with reference to the fact that in no other Reform Bill since the beginning of the century had any attempt been made to increase the number of Members constituting that House. In view of all these examples, he contended that they would not be justified, even for the purpose of adding to the present number of Scotch Representatives, which he freely admitted was a desirable procedure, in adding to the total number of the House. It was not for him, an humble individual, to point out how the additional Members were to be obtained for the purpose of giving extra representation to Scotland. The examples he had quoted showed that great statesmen who, on former occasions, had introduced and carried Reform Bills, found opportunities for increasing the representation of Scotland. He acknowledged that Scotland was entitled to a larger representation than it had at present; but it ought not to obtain it at the expense of an addition to the numbers of the House. Therefore, with great confidence in the justice and reasonableness of his suggestion, he begged to move the new clause which stood in his name.

Clause (Number of Members of the House of Commons,)—(*Sir Eardley Wilmot,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The hon. Baronet says it is not for him, a humble individual, to show how the additional Members for Scotland ought to be obtained without increasing the number of the Members of the House.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT: I said I would not take it upon myself to do so, as I considered that incumbent upon the Government.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I am quoting the hon. Baronet's words. He said he, as a humble individual, would not say how the extra Members to be given to Scotland should be found. Now, it is an essential part of the hon. Gentleman's case—for not only on this occasion, but on former occasions, he has announced it—that there should be no diminution in the representation of Ireland.

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT: I say that now.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Then he wishes to obtain the seats for Scotland from England

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT: On former occasions framers of Reform Bills

have found means of adding to the representation of Scotland. I think it would be quite within your power to do that now.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The only effect of the hon. Gentleman's proposal would be that seats should be taken from England and Wales and given to Scotland. I do not think the Committee generally would desire to take that course, for I am bound to say that on the two former occasions on which this matter was discussed — namely, on the Motion of the right hon. and gallant Admiral the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay), and also on the Motion of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) —there did not appear to be any general feeling in the House against the proposal that is made in the Bill. The practical result of the proposal of the hon. Gentleman (Sir Eardley Wilmot), if adopted, would be that we should have to do exactly what he strongly protests against—that is to say, to take three Members from Ireland. The hon. Baronet has argued that if we now fix the number of Members at 670, we shall probably, at some future time, go further, and increase the number still more. That is not my opinion. I venture to think that if you look at the framework of this Bill, you will find that it is unlikely that in the future any proposal to increase the number of the House will be made. All that it will ever be likely to do in the future will simply be to increase the quota of the population.

MR. RAIKES said, he was not at all disappointed to hear what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill (Sir Charles W. Dilke), because the right hon. Baronet was unable to vote in support of the Amendment which was moved when the Motion was made that "The Speaker do leave the Chair." With regard to taking a certain number of Members from Ireland and a certain number from Wales, he (Mr. Raikes) wished to explain why he thought the proposal which his hon. Friend (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had made now deserved the serious consideration of the Committee. It seemed to him it was a proposal which, apart from political exigencies, would probably command the adhesion of every Member of the Committee; he did not suppose that even the Members of the Treasury Bench, or of the Front Opposition Bench, would dissent from this proposition, if it were not for special and particular circumstances which had led hon. and right hon. Gentlemen to a different conclusion. But they were told that it would be impossible to deal with this Amendment so as to incorporate it in the Bill, without altering the scale in a way which would be distasteful to the Committee. He, however, differed from that view. He quite accepted the necessity that it would entail the taking of three Members from Ireland. He had always felt that it would be extremely undesirable—if not, indeed, unjust—to reduce Ireland to a representation below the Act of Union number of 100; but he believed that between 100 and 103 it was open to the Committee to consider whether they should not find an opportunity—if they could do so in accordance with the scale—of reducing the representation of Ireland to the amount prescribed by the Act of Union. He ventured to point out that, in dealing with Ireland, the scale had been departed from. There were several of the Irish counties which received from this Bill representation to which they would not have been entitled had they been English counties. There were two or three Irish counties which obtained four Members, but which, had they been in England, would only have obtained three Members; and there was at least one county in Ireland which received three Members, but which, if it had been in England, would only have received two—he referred to the county of Armagh. Now, that county contained only 162,000 inhabitants, and it was, therefore, below the limit of 165,000 entitling to three Members.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE remarked that, in order to keep up the balance between boroughs and counties, large counties were better treated than large boroughs.

MR. RAIKES said, he had no doubt that the statement just made by the right hon. Baronet was perfectly consistent with the rest of his argument; but he (Mr. Raikes) did not see that it bound the Committee. He understood that no constituency under 165,000 inhabitants was entitled to three Members —that was to say, that there should be a Member for a little over every 50,000

people. He could not see why Leicester, for instance, was to be content with two Members, while some Irish counties, scarcely exceeding it in population, and immeasurably inferior to it in wealth and every other ingredient which went to make up an important town, should have three and four Members. There were one or two Irish counties which were now to return four Members to which the same argument applied. There were Tipperary and Tyrone for example. Both these counties were over-represented as compared with English constituencies of the same population. He did not think it would be very unjust, therefore, if three Members were taken from the Irish counties he had named, and by that means the Irish representation would be brought down to 100, as prescribed by the Act of Union. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) received very little encouragement when he proposed to raise the limit of disfranchisement above 15,000 as regarded single boroughs. He Mr. Raikes observed, however, that most of the proposals made in that House by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Salford received very little encouragement, and he did not think, therefore, that they ought to argue too far on that particular case; but, at the same time, the particular question was settled by a very decided and overwhelming vote so far as the representation of the small towns was concerned. He (Mr. Raikes) wished to ask whether there was not another way of dealing with the towns containing 15,000 inhabitants otherwise than by disfranchising them; was it not possible that some arrangement should be made by which the small constituencies should be grouped together and enjoy representation conjointly with each other, but in such a manner as to create constituencies which would still fall short of the quota for a single Member? Peterborough, for example, had no particular claim that he knew of on the House to return any excessive number of Members. It contained some 22,000 inhabitants, and it was within half-an-hour, by the Great Northern Railway, of the town of Grantham, which had a population of 15,000. He could not see why these towns could not be grouped together; in that way one Member would be gained. He thought other constituencies might very easily be found capable of being grouped. He did not know whether grouping was objected to by the present Government, although it was invented by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister; he knew that the Government disliked the phrase, but he did not see why they should not accept the fact. They might well combine a certain number of constituencies containing populations which, in the aggregate, would amount to somewhere about 55,000, and thereby obtain three or four Members more. He was speaking now both of England and Wales. Then there came another part of the question which had not yet been raised in the Committee, but which was deserving consideration, and that was the question of the boroughs above 50,000 which still retained two Members. He had put down upon the Paper an Amendment, which he should not at all attempt to discuss now, dealing with the smallest of these boroughs—he meant the town of Ipswich. He put that Amendment down, having special regard to the fact that if the quota of representation by one Member was fixed at 54,000 or 55,000 there could not be any shadow of a reason for giving two Members to any constituency which was not, by population, even entitled to one Member. There were one or two other boroughs to be found in the same category—for instance, Stockport and Northampton. No doubt, hon Members would be sorry to deprive the House of the ornaments which those boroughs contributed to their Assembly; but still it might be possible, with the view of public necessity, even to make a sacrifice of that description. He certainly could not see why this proposition, which was based on experience of foreign countries and supported by the experience of this Assembly, should be put aside as wholly unworthy of consideration when the materials were at hand for giving it immediate effect. Of course they heard a great deal about the compact, and he would quite admit that the scheme, as a whole, was a fairly reasonable one. He also readily admitted that the compact was an arrangement which, of course, afforded the only opportunity of passing through this House any Redistribution Bill which would have any approximation to justice; but even the best of rules admitted of exceptions, and he could not see why it should not be possible so far

to infringe on this scheme in the direction proposed. He could not for the life of him understand why they should not be allowed to alter the scheme in any one single particular. He hoped the Committee would pause before rejecting the new clause which his hon. Friend (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had proposed. He believed that if the Committee was free from those bugbears which were constantly paraded before it, there would be very little difference of opinion as to the desirability of accepting this clause. He appealed to the judgment of the Committee as to whether, before they started upon the Schedules, it was not proper to deal with this question, and retain, if possible, that number of Members which had been found to work so well throughout the whole of the present century.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I consider that the question whether the number of Members of the House should be increased is a question which the Committee itself must deal with and decide upon; but my opinion is that undoubtedly the easiest and simplest way of dealing with the difficulty which presents itself is by making an addition to the number of the Members of the House. If you enter upon a business like that of recasting the representation of the people in this House, recasting it as far as you can upon the principle of equalization, you will find that you have to go into very difficult and complicated questions; and, undoubtedly, if you had to begin with reducing the number of Members allotted to any particular part of the United Kingdom, you raise the question of equalization in a much more difficult form than you would if you add to the number of the House. Undoubtedly, the criticisms that would have been applied to your scheme would have been very great if the scheme were one involving the taking away Members from England and Wales for the sake of adding to the representation of Scotland; they would have been of such a very difficult and complicated character, that I think the Government have acted wisely, and that we are right in agreeing with them. I myself feel perfectly at one with the Government in the proposal they make with regard to the mode of dealing with the increase in the representation of Scotland. It has been said that what is to be now done will establish a precedent for further increasing the number of the House if at any future time an occasion arises; but we must bear in mind the particular circumstances under which this increase is proposed. We have just admitted no less than 2,000,000 voters to the electorate, which has thereby been raised from 3,000,000 to 5,000,000. The large addition of 2,000,000 voters does supply a reason for the addition to the number of the Members of the House. Upon the whole, it is the easiest method of dealing with this question, and it is one which is most likely to produce a satisfactory result. I think the Committee may well be content with the proposal of the Government.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: After the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes), perhaps I may be allowed to make one observation. The right hon. Gentleman says that the scheme is undoubtedly favourable to the Irish counties; but that is not the case. If the right hon. Gentleman will look at the scheme after the adjustment of boundaries which took place after the Bill was first introduced, he will see that the only two counties which are out of their place in the scale, so far as population is concerned, are two English counties—namely, Worcestershire and Wiltshire. The right hon. Gentleman mentions two counties—namely, Tipperary and Tyrone, from each of which a Member might very properly be taken. Now, the populations of these counties are 197,000 and 199,000 respectively; while Dorsetshire, with a population of 191,000, has the same number of Members allotted. The other case the right hon. Gentleman mentioned was the county of Armagh. Now, it has 157,000 of a population, and is to have three Members; while the East Riding of Yorkshire has 145,000 of a population, and also three Members. I have not mentioned the cases where we have left counties with a certain number of Members; but I have specially confined my remarks to where additional Members have been given.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: I am anxious to say a few words on this question, because I regret to find myself in entire disagreement with what has just fallen from my right hon. Friend

(Sir Stafford Northcote). My right hon. Friend argued in favour of the proposal to increase the number of the Members of the House by 12, on the ground that it was the easiest way of dealing with the necessity of giving 12 Members to Scotland. I am quite ready to admit that Scotland ought to have 12 additional Members, and in nothing I should say or do in the Committee would I seek to deprive Scotland of the proposed additional representation. But I entirely demur to my right hon. Friend's argument that we ought to adopt the course of adding 12 Members to the House, merely because it is the easiest way of getting over the difficulty. I must say, with all respect to my right hon. Friend and the Government, that it appears to me to be a piece of timidity which this House ought not to sanction. It appears to me that in making this addition to the House we are establishing a vicious, because a totally unnecessary, precedent. The hon. Baronet the Member for South Warwickshire (Sir Eardley Wilmot has stated to the Committee that this is the first occasion since the Act of Union, at the commencement of the century, on which an addition has been made to the Members of this House. Of course, the Act of Union was a very great measure, which dealt with exceptional circumstances, requiring exceptional provisions. Sir, it cannot be necessary to add to the numbers of the House for the better transaction of the Business of the country. Why, the vice of this House is too much talk, and the more Members you add to the House, the more certain it is that the talk will be increased. It may be said that the addition of 12 Members will make no material difference; but if you once make this increase, because you have to meet the claims of Scotland to additional representation, another occasion may arise 10 or 20 years hence, when some other part of the United Kingdom may make a similar claim; and then you will have this precedent established —that the only way to meet the claim is to add to the number of Members. The addition of 2,000,000 voters to the constituencies of the United Kingdom is, to my mind, no reason for making this addition of 12 Members to the House. It cannot be argued that 658 Members are not sufficient to represent the constituencies of this Kingdom, however numerous the voters in the constituencies may be. Well, then, the simple and sole reason for this addition of 12 Members is, that it is the easiest way of meeting the claims of Scotland. Well, but have the claims of Scotland never had to be met before? They were met in the Act for which my right hon. Friend himself was responsible in 1867. Scotland then received an addition of seven Members, and those Members were taken from English constituencies. What have you now to do? The Committee are aware that there are at present six vacant seats, owing to constituencies in England and Ireland having been disfranchised for corruption. Cannot Scotland have those six seats? Then there would only be six more to provide, towards which we might take the three from Ireland, to which my right hon. Friend (Mr. Raikes) refers. Why should Ireland have more Members than was fixed by the Act of Union? I can see no reason at all. And surely the remaining three might be found out of the excess of Members which you propose to lavish on the Metropolis and great towns; or out of the constituencies between 50,000 and 55,000 inhabitants, who certainly have no right whatever to two Members, when larger towns than they are only to have one. These are propositions which I say, if Her Majesty's Government and the Committee are willing to deal with this question courageously, might meet the difficulty. By the means I have shown, it would be perfectly possible to find the increase for the representation of Scotland without any addition to the number of the Members of the House. I hope that my hon. Friend (Sir Eardley Wilmot will press his Motion to a division, and that, if unsuccessful, he will raise the question again; because, by so doing, he will do his best to free the House from the establishment of a precedent which, in my opinion, may lead to great mischief in the future, and which ought not to be sanctioned now, because there is not the slightest necessity for it

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I am perfectly amazed at the speech we have just heard. The right hon. Gentleman raises objection to the quota of 50,000, which is an essential portion of the agreement that was made I cannot understand how he can have made that

speech, if he recollects what the agreement was. He has spoken of six seats which are at present vacant as if they were permanently vacant. By this Bill they are filled up; and, therefore, he would have to find nine seats, even if the Committee consented to take away three seats from Ireland—from Tyrone, Tipperary, and Belfast—which, I presume, they would not do. The nine seats would have to be taken away England—would have to be taken, as the right hon. Gentleman says, from the Metropolis and the larger towns of the country. The first county on the list which would necessarily suffer or lose a seat would be the county of Wiltshire, in which the right hon. Gentleman is a very large landowner. I do not know whether the inhabitants of Wiltshire would be satisfied with the decrease of their number of seats; anyhow, that would be the first consequence of the adoption of the Amendment. Worcestershire and Wiltshire would be the two English counties which would stand first on the list to lose seats. The Amendment before the Committee has been seconded by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Raikes). Now, that right hon. Gentleman complained the other night that we only allowed two seats to the City of London, and that, generally speaking, the Metropolis was badly treated by the Bill; and now we have the right hon. Baronet (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) supporting this proposition, and telling us that seats ought to be taken away from the Metropolis.

Mr. GORST said, he wished to say a word or two in support of the compact which had been arrived at by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) and Her Majesty's Government, which appeared to him to be receiving a great deal of undeserved censure in this matter; undeserved, because they were following precisely the precedent set in 1867 by the late Mr. Disraeli. On that occasion it was necessary to increase the representation of Scotland. The representation of England was settled by the Bill of that year; but no Members were provided in the scheme for the increase in the representation of Scotland. He (Mr. Gorst) remembered very well that when Mr. Disraeli was pressed as to where he was going to get the additional Members for Scotland, he said he had no doubt the wisdom of Parliament would provide. In 1868 the Representation of the People Bill for Scotland was brought in, and by the operation of that Bill the number of Members of this House was greatly increased, and the Bill was read a second time and was proceeding in the House with an increase of the number of Members of the House. The increase, however, was so repugnant to the sense of Parliament, that the wisdom of Parliament did provide for the emergency, for by the 43rd section of the Representation of the People (Scotland) Act there were no less than seven English boroughs disfranchised for the purpose of providing seats for Scotland. Therefore, it appeared to him (Mr. Gorst) that the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Stafford Northcote) and Her Majesty's Government, in putting before the House this scheme for increasing the number of seats, were following the precedents of 1867 and 1868; and if Parliament was desirous of limiting the number of Members of the House to the magic number of 658, it must be for the wisdom of Parliament to discover where the 12 seats could be saved. There were a good many proposals made for the taking away of seats from different persons and places. There were some small boroughs even yet returning Members; and he had no doubt that if an Amendment were proposed to take away from these the 12 Members which were required for Scotland, Parliament would desire to accept such a proposal if it were before the Committee. No doubt the Government and the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) would act as Mr. Disraeli acted in 1868, and recognize the wisdom of Parliament by accepting a very reasonable proposal.

Dr. LYONS protested against any proposal for the reduction of the number of Representatives for Ireland. The representation of Ireland was fully and carefully considered at the time of the Union, and the opinion of such great statesmen as Lord Castlereagh in this matter should have attached to it the weight it deserved.

Mr. BRODRICK said that, for his own part, he could not support the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) on this occasion. He could not but regret to

see such an instance of absolute pusillanimity as that, when the Leaders of the two Parties had come together, an obvious measure of justice, based on population with regard to the Three Kingdoms, had not been carried out from the fear of offending a Party in the Committee. He regretted to see that the Government should have entered on the task in such a spirit and taken this step, not on grounds of absolute justice, but on the ground that hon. Members forming that section of the Committee might consider themselves aggrieved. There was not an hon. Member in the House who had ventured, during the whole course of these discussions, to assume for one moment that it would be possible to carry on Public Business in the next Parliament with the large and preponderating influence which would be given to one class of Irish Members in the House. If, with their present numbers, the fear of them was so great as to induce the Government to depart in their interest from the lines on which the measure was framed, what did the House suppose would be the state of affairs in the next Parliament? The whole power of dictating the course of Business would be placed in the hands of that section of Members by the action the Government had taken; and, for his own part, he felt it necessary to vote against an increase of the number of Members of the House. He could not help feeling that the opportunity of doing justice to all parts of the United Kingdom had been missed, and that the attempt which had been made to give extra representation to Scotland, at the expense of the numbers of the House, was one which would still leave Scotland at a disadvantage in view of the preponderating influence given to Ireland, and that the proposition before the Committee might have been avoided if justice had been done without fear or favour to all parties in the country.

MR. H. S. NORTHCOTE said, he had voted in favour of the reduction of the number of Irish Representatives; but it appeared to him that if the Amendment were carried, the only effect would be that England would lose a number of Members, while Scotland would get her increase. He could not support the principle of giving Scotland that increase at the expense of the English constituencies. In refusing to vote for the proposal, he was simply refusing to vote for the reduction of English Members by nine.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 47; Noes 149: Majority 102.—Div. List, No. 62

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that in consequence of a communication which had been sent across the Table to him by the right hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) to move the notes to the Schedules as a new clause he had given an undertaking to do so, and he now wished to give effect to that undertaking. He merely wished to say that he had been quite right in his assertion that many Bills had contained notes to the Schedules in the form in which they had appeared in this Bill. The Artizans' Dwellings Act was a case in point, and a similar form had been adopted in connection with other measures, although, so far as he was personally concerned, he preferred to have the notes in the form of a clause.

New Clause Notes to the Schedules,)—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Question, "That the Clause be now read a second time," put, and *agreed to*.

Amendment proposed, in line 1, to leave out the words "Notes to the."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived*.

Amendment proposed, after the word "Schedules," to insert the words "to this Act."

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to*.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that in line 6 of the Schedule the right hon. Baronet opposite Sir Charles W. Dilke) appeared to him to define *obscurum per obscurius*. He said "the word county means county at large." What did that mean?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he had thought that surely the right hon. Gentleman would have been capable of understanding that the phrase "county at large" was a phrase commonly used

to describe the whole Parliamentary county.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: It distinguishes between a county and a division of a county.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Yes; that is so.

Amendment proposed,

In page 12, line 29, after "eighty-five," insert "for the purposes of municipal elections."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. E. STANHOPE said, it seemed to him very absurd to put in as a definition of a Parliamentary polling district those which existed on the 1st of January, 1885, seeing that they were going to alter the Parliamentary districts in this Bill.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, it had been impossible to leave to Local Authorities the power of altering the dates of elections. It was necessary to fix them by law, and it was necessary also to have some past date. They could not take some future day. It would, of course, be very easy to alter the date on some future occasion.

Question put, and *agreed to;* words inserted accordingly.

MR. CAUSTON said, he wished to move a new clause to the effect that at any General Election the elections in all cities and boroughs of the United Kingdom should be held on one and the same day. The same objection could not be raised to this clause that was raised by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross); and he might say that he moved this Amendment in the interests of the electors, candidates, and Returning Officers. Such an arrangement as he proposed would be fair to all parties. No uncertainty as to the day of election could possibly prevail; no pressure could be put on the Returning Officer to fix a day; and the Party opposed to the political views of the Returning Officer could not be damnified by that person's choice of date for the election. He was sure that it would be much more agreeable to the feelings of the Returning Officer himself to have the day fixed in this way, and also that it would be greatly to the interest of commerce throughout the United Kingdom to have all these contests taking place simultaneously. He could see no possible objection to adopting this course. He could see that in the case of the counties there might be some difficulty in carrying out a similar proposal; but in the case of the boroughs he maintained that the clause would be found to work to the interests of Returning Officers, and would avoid pressure or Party feeling being brought to bear on the Returning Officer by either side. As to who was to fix the day for a General Election, that would have to be made the subject of another clause. There would be no difficulty in adopting a plan for fixing that day. It might be made a certain number of days succeeding the issue of the Writ, or they might say that if Parliament dissolved on such and such a day the election in all boroughs should take place on such and such a day. He could not see any serious obstacle in the way of carrying out this proposal. He, therefore, hoped that the Committee would give its careful and favourable consideration to his plan. He moved the clause in no Party spirit. He thought it was a fair and reasonable proposal, as he had said before, in the interests of the electors, candidates, and Returning Officers.

New Clause (General Elections,)—(*Mr. Causton,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that this Amendment seemed to him to be a little wide of the object of the Bill. It was a mere declaration of principle also, and did not provide any machinery for carrying out the principle it laid down, and it would require a considerable amendment of the law in order to carry it out. The Rules were issued to the Returning Officers, but there was an Act which allowed elasticity with regard to distance and so forth; and provision would have to be made to enable places at a distance from London, such as those in the North of Scotland, and in the extreme West of Ireland, to receive the Writs and to arrange the elections. The Writs took much longer time to reach some places than others. But his main objection to the proposal was that it was wide of the object of the Bill.

MR. CROPPER said, that, in spite of the remarks of his right hon. Friend (Sir Charles W. Dilke), he could not help thinking that it would be of very great value at the present time to assert the principle of the Amendment. It seemed to him that, in addition to other advantages which would be given, the Amendment would obviate the great inconvenience which arose from the dislocation of business, the excitement, and the troubles to a candidate resulting from the present want of uniformity in the dates of elections. They should have this very important fact before them—that in a General Election the losing Party lost a great deal more through this want of uniformity for the reason that when a few elections went against a Party the electors at subsequent elections were influenced by what had already taken place. The losing Party in 1874, and also in 1880, lost more than they otherwise would have done by reason of the effect of one borough election upon another. The result of winning some seats resulted in a considerable number of other victories being gained. There were many men who had so little political principle that they would seem to allow their opinions to be decided by the success which one or other of the Parties was obtaining around them. It seemed to him that by fixing one date for all elections they would get over all the trouble, all the excitement, and all the causes that at present existed. They themselves as candidates would be immensely benefited, and as electors they would also feel it a great blessing. He could not conceive how anyone could object to the proposal, except the newspapers, which reaped a great harvest from recording false and true reports as to the results of various elections which were going on for a considerable period. It seemed to him that the difficulty as to counties would not hold in regard to cities and boroughs. There could be no objection on the score of the Returning Officer having the work to do, because that official would not be called upon to do any more work than he would have to perform at present. As to the difficulty assumed by the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) in regard to the distance and the difficulty of communication, it seemed to him that in the days of quick posts and telegraphs the difficulty was reduced to almost nothing. He was convinced that if it could be stated that on the Wednesday or the Thursday after the Dissolution of Parliament a new Election should take place, quite sufficient time would be granted, and it would be possible in all boroughs to carry out the arrangement. It seemed to him that the amount of trouble that was caused by persons who went from one borough to another—by platform orators, men in the moon, and the various other notorious persons who exercised some influence on election days being unable to carry on their operations in various districts at various times—would be done away with, and that they would have a much more simple, a much less expensive, and a much less exciting method of carrying on a contest at the time of a General Election than they had at present. He hoped the hon. Member (Mr. Causton) would go into the Lobby, because he believed he would see that there were a great many hon. Members in the Committee who had found from their own experience the immense difficulties which attached to not having all the elections on one day.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he wished to point out what an enormous inconvenience would follow from the adoption of this clause, because the same day would have to be appointed for elections, not only in all the boroughs of England, but throughout the Kingdom, including the far distant Wick Burghs. Not a single borough election could take place in England until the day appointed for the election in the Wick Burghs arrived. That would involve an enormous inconvenience; and, certainly, there was nothing that could add more to the turmoil of an election contest.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he thought there were certainly some strong reasons in favour of the proposed clause. It had always seemed to him—and the last two General Elections had greatly supported the view—that an undue amount of weight was attached to those elections which took place on the first day of the contest; and when the result of the first day's elections, in what he might call a few petty boroughs was in favour of one particular Party, that Party gained an undue advantage in the contests still pending in the more important consti-

tuencies. However, circumstances had occurred since the last General Election which materially affected the matter, and greatly modified that view. In the first place, these small boroughs had been got rid of—the Parliamentary boroughs of the country would now be of a much larger size than those he had referred to. In the second place, he did not think that the subsequent elections would, for the future, be affected to so great an extent by those which were decided at the very beginning of the contest. Therefore, although there might formerly have been good reason for the adoption of such a course as was now proposed, there would not be the same necessity for it now, especially as the larger boroughs were now to be divided into divisions.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH thought the drawback of the proposal would outweigh its advantages. One day might be more convenient than another for election in one particular borough; but it might be just the opposite in the case of another borough.

Sir PATRICK O'BRIEN said, he wished to say one word. This question appeared to him to contain a balance of inconveniences. It was inconvenient, no doubt, for any gentleman, who had five, six, seven, or eight votes in different constituencies, and who wished to utilize them all. He could quite understand why the proposition of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Colchester (Mr. Causton) should not be likely to be received with very much gratification by hon. Gentlemen who were placed in that position. But if the Committee would look at the matter fairly, they ought to consider, not alone the inconveniences of those who were surfeited with votes, but the convenience of those hon. Gentlemen who had one constituency to stand for. He spoke as an Irish Member, who would not be at all sorry if hon. Gentlemen opposite, who spoke with a power of language to which he never could pretend, and who followed the Leadership of the hon. Member for the City of Cork—(Mr. Parnell)—could be concentrated together in some small bailliewick. He had heard it said to-night, in reply to the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), who moved the first Amendment, that the essence of this Bill was the representation of diversity of interests and of local feeling, so that the people of a locality should be allowed to express their opinions fairly and freely without interference. It appeared to him (Sir Patrick O'Brien) that a system such as had been proposed by the hon. Member for Colchester would be of advantage in Ireland. Although on other occasions he would be delighted to hear those hon. Gentlemen opposite, to whom he had already referred, and who had made their names famous all over Europe by their oratory, still, for his own part, and notwithstanding the fact that he himself in his humble person had the honour of having five votes in Ireland, he would be very willing to sacrifice four of them for the purpose of obtaining the absence of those hon. Gentlemen during his election. He did not think, in saying that, that he was pursuing a course which was very different from that of many hon. Gentlemen—he would, not of course, call them professional politicians—who believed that they occupied a status in society, which numbers of people might give to them, but which the whole community might not; and who, if they lost a seat in one place, had a chance of what he might call "trying back" in three or four others. Under these circumstances, he would be disposed to support the Motion of the hon. Gentleman; but there was one consideration which, perhaps, might remove the difficulty, and that was that there were such gentlemen as Returning Officers and Sheriffs, who looked after the returns; and it was a question for the consideration of the Committee whether, instead of laying down a hard-and-fast rule, such as that proposed by the hon. Member for Colchester, they should not leave the matter to the discretion of these Returning Officers and Sheriffs. It would, no doubt, be a good thing in Ireland to have all the oratory in one day—one orator in Mayo, another in Galway, another in Cork, another in King's County, and others in other places—and then the people in the morning who read all these efforts, which were to be admired or deplored as people might think fit, would have the advantage of getting all these orations in one morning's journal, which would be a great gratification, instead of having them spread over four or five weeks.

Mr. CAUSTON said, he would not trouble the Committee to divide, as the Government did not find it possible to

fall in with the suggestion he had made.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

First Schedule.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir Charles W. Dilke.*)

MR. MONK said, he wished to know whether, before the Schedules came on for discussion, it would not be as well to have the Bill reprinted, so that the Committee might see clearly what alterations had been made in it?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that hardly any Amendments had been made to the Bill; and certainly none had been made that were of the slightest importance. There would, therefore, be nothing to reprint.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

ARMY (COMMISSARIAT AND TRANSPORT SERVICES).

MOTION FOR RE-APPOINTMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

COLONEL STANLEY: Perhaps, Sir, the House will allow me to say a few words in explanation of the Motion which it is my duty to make, and particularly as the circumstances under which I have to make it are somewhat peculiar. The Motion is one for the re-appointment of a Select Committee which was appointed last year to inquire into the Commissariat and Transport Services. The Committee was appointed, I believe, on the Motion of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), and the appointment was at that time assented to by the Government. That Committee sat during last year, and took a large amount of very valuable evidence, which remains in the form of a very voluminous Blue Book. But we were not able to conclude our inquiry; and it was particularly desirable, before the inquiry was concluded, that the evidence of Lord Wolseley, and of one or two other officers, should be taken in regard to statements which had been made before the Committee. The Committee, therefore, concluded their labours for the year by only reporting the evidence, and not entering into the consideration of a Report; and I, as the official channel of communication between the Committee and the House, had laid upon me by them the duty of asking that in the next Session of Parliament the Committee should be re-appointed. Speaking, if the House will allow me, from a personal point of view, I feel that the duty laid upon me by the Committee collectively is one from which I cannot free myself, even though there are the individual expressions of opinion from almost every Member of the Committee that it would be better that the recommendation should not be made. I, therefore, feel myself officially bound to make this Motion; and it must be for the House and for the Government to determine how, under the circumstances, it had better be dealt with. I speak without any bias one way or the other. The Committee was one of great importance, and I hope that even in the time it was sitting it may have produced some good. No doubt, with the assistance of the able Members who formed the Committee, we should have produced a Report which, without being unduly sanguine, I may say might have been of some value; but I am bound to say that if, as I have some reason to believe, the Government are now going to oppose my Motion, I must admit that the circumstances under which we sat last year, and those in which we find ourselves now, are widely dissimilar. Many of the officers whom, for my own part, I should have wished to call to give evidence are now serving in Egypt and elsewhere; and it is obvious that at the present time a very great strain is laid upon those Departments at home, the attendance of whose Representatives we should have had to require before the Committee. I can easily conceive that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) may find it his duty to oppose the re-appointment of this Committee; but, at the same time, I think that I am only fulfilling my duty in bringing the Motion before the House, and I am only fulfilling the duty which the Committee laid upon me in asking the House to re-appoint this Committee with the Instructions which

are usual in such cases. I hope, Sir, that I have made my explanation of the rather remarkable position in which we are placed as briefly as possible under the circumstances. I must now leave the Motion to be dealt with by the Government and the House. Of course, I shall move the re-appointment of the Committee; and if a division should be taken, I shall certainly, for my own part, divide in favour of the proposition.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the Commissariat and Transport Services of the British Army in the recent Egyptian Campaign (1882), and to consider what changes, if any, are required to secure increased efficiency in these Services, be re-appointed:—That Mr. BRAND, Dr. CAMERON, Colonel MILNE HOME, Mr. CARINGTON, Mr. BROWN, Mr. JACKSON, Sir HENRY FLETCHER, Lord EDWARD CAVENDISH, Colonel NOLAN, Mr. EARP, Mr. HERBERT, Dr. FARQUHARSON, and Colonel STANLEY be the Members of the said Committee: That the Committtee have power to send for persons, papers, and records: That Five be the quorum of the Committee."—(*Colonel Stanley.*)

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I am not able to assent, as I should under ordinary circumstances have done, to this Motion, as a matter of form; and perhaps the House will think it right, after the observations just made by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, that I should state why it will be my duty not to assent to it. I will give the House some reasons why I think this Committee should not be re-appointed. The inquiry which was undertaken by the Committee last year was one which had to deal not only with the present state of facts and details connected with the Expedition to Egypt in 1882, but also with the much larger question of the organization of the Supply and Transport Service of the Army, and also of the Transport branch of the Admiralty. Well, Sir, at the present moment the energies of all these Departments are taxed to a very considerable extent by the operations now in progress in connection with the Expedition to the Nile and the Expedition to Suakin, and to a minor but still to a great and sufficient extent by the operations going on in Bechuanaland. Under these circumstances, it is quite impossible for the officials connected with these Departments to devote all the care and attention which they ought to do to the general business of the Departments, and, at the same time, to give as much time and attention as they would desire to the inquiry which it is sought to renew before the Committee. Either they would have to devote less time than at present to the duties of the Departments, or else they would have to give less time to this inquiry, which not only involves matters of great public importance, but also, to a certain extent, their own conduct. In addition to all this, there is another consideration which has been mentioned by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman—the consideration that at this moment some of the most essential witnesses whom the Committee would have to examine in order to conclude their inquiry and make their Report are not in the country. Lord Wolseley is the principal of these, and I think the House will agree that, he having been principally concerned in the operations into which the Committee have been inquiring, it would be impossible for them to finish their inquiry and agree to their Report without his evidence. Not only is that the case, but other officers are also absent at the present time, and many of those whom the Committee would wish to examine could not be examined at all. Well, Sir, if this inquiry had developed any very great defects of administration, or if it had brought to light any serious breakdown on the part of any of the Departments, the re-appointment of this Committee would not be opposed by the Government, even although the inquiry had been, as I have said, in some degree inconvenient under the circumstances. But I do not think that, in the opinion of the majority at all events of the Committee, that is the case. The evidence of the various witnesses who have already been examined has clearly established the fact that there was nothing in the campaign or in the arrangements made by the Supply or Transport Departments which led to anything in the nature of a breakdown. Sir John Adye, as Chief of the Staff, was examined, and he gave evidence to show that the officers and men of all ranks did their duty remarkably well, and that there was no breakdown of any kind. Commissary General Watt, who was one of the witnesses on whose evidence the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron) chiefly relied, stated the same thing—that there was no breakdown and no

great failure, except in one matter. The chief Medical Officer of the Expedition stated that the supplies were excellent and abundant, and that they never suffered from the want of anything except during the first week, when there was some defect; but that vanished very speedily. Lord Wolseley has not been examined; but his opinion also is that there was nothing in the Commissariat and Transport arrangements which amounted to a breakdown, and he thinks that such difficulties as arose were not attributable to defective organization, but arose from military exigencies of an exceptional character. A great deal of evidence has been given before the Committee as to what the present system really is. There has been great diversity of opinion, and it has been fully inquired into. The system and organization which have been in existence since 1880 have been more clearly defined; and I do not think there will be in future any falling off in their efficiency. In addition to these considerations I may mention that since the Committee closed their inquiry last Session three Expeditions have been sent out. There has been an Expedition to the Nile, an Expedition to Bechuanaland, and an Expedition to Suakin; and a great deal of attention has necessarily been directed to the working of the Supply and Transport Services, and I am able to say that the arrangements made by them have worked with perfect smoothness up to the present. The organization has been the same as that of 1882, and it seems to me that, considering that there has been no hitch and no complaint, anything wanting in the arrangements made in 1882 was due not to defective organization, but rather to those subsidiary matters which always will occur under exceptional circumstances, and which no system of organization could possibly alter or amend, and that we may be reasonably satisfied with the result. Before the Committee was appointed Lord Wolseley had himself tested some of the arrangements in the Supply and Transport Departments, and especially the regulations for the governance of the lines of communications. A Committee had already been appointed, under the Presidency of Lord Morley, consisting of several officers and War Department officials—officers of military knowledge and very great experience — who were directed to inquire into these matters. That inquiry was suspended; but I would humbly suggest that an inquiry by that Committee would be quite as efficient as an inquiry by this House. Looking at the inconvenience which would be sustained by the Public Service if the heads of these Departments were to be taken off from their present duties to attend upon an inquiry—a controversial inquiry—like that now proposed; looking also to the fact that no case of any deficiency or breakdown has been established by the evidence already laid before the Committee, and looking to the absence of many important witnesses, I am inclined to think that the House will agree with me that there could be no advantage, but rather a disadvantage, to the Public Service if this Committee were re-appointed. I trust that, under these circumstances, the House will not agree to the Motion.

DR. CAMERON said, that every Member of the Committee must be greatly obliged to the noble Marquess for the Report with which he had supplemented their labours. The only drawback to that eulogistic and whitewashing Report was, that the noble Marquess was not a Member of the Committee, and did not hear the evidence. He (Dr. Cameron) could quote any amount of evidence to prove that there was the very greatest breakdown; but, before he dealt with that point, he would advert to the remarks of the noble Marquess on the injury to the Public Service which would result if this Committee were re-appointed. They had been a long time discovering that injury. At the conclusion of the labours of the Committee last year, it was unanimously agreed that they should ask for re-appointment this Session; and it was an unprecedented thing that the Government should now come forward and oppose the re-appointment of a Committee which had gone through an immense amount of work, and which had unanimously recommended its re-appointment. It was understood that the re-appointment of the Committee would be moved for in the Autumn Session; but representations were made to him, asking him to postpone the matter while war preparations were proceeding, and he did so until the commencement of the present Session. He was then asked to wait a

There was another element in the matter. If the Committee were certain to report as the noble Marquess had reported, he (Dr. Cameron) did not believe there would have been any difficulty in obtaining their re-appointment; but he (Dr. Cameron) was by no means certain that the Committee would agree to a "Report" such as that of which the noble Marquess had submitted a draft to the House. He (Dr. Cameron), had reason to believe that the majority of the Committee were in favour of reform, and thought a case for it had been abundantly established. If the Committee adopted that view, they would have made recommendations of reform which would be unpalatable to some of the parties concerned. If the Government could stave off inquiry this Session, they would not only get rid of further disclosures—and such he could, if more were necessary to persuade them, bring before the Committee—but they could reconstitute a Committee in which they would have a chance of securing a Report more in accordance with their way of thinking. He could not help suspecting that was the object of the Government, not only from their conduct that night, but from their action all through—their excuses for postponing, postponing, and postponing, on pretence of inconvenience to the Departments, their action in suppressing evidence last year, on pretence that it would be more convenient at a later stage of the inquiry, and in giving the Committee Correspondence so edited as to leave out the most compromising parts. It would have redounded more to the credit of a reforming Government, anxious to provide for the welfare of the State, if they had agreed to the re-appointment of the Committee, even had they done so with the foregone determination to disregard its recommendations, as the recommendations of similar Committees were so often disregarded in case of their proving unpalatable to the official who controlled the War Office.

COLONEL MILNE-HOME said, as he took a somewhat prominent part in the debate which preceded the appointment of the Committee he thought it right to say a few words, more especially as he had attended most of the meetings of the Committee over which his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) presided. All that the House [illegible] more was cognisant of was the [illegible] the Committee reported they [illegible] in a position to present their [illegible] evidence to the House, and to [illegible] to sit again. There could be [illegible] his mind, one conclusion for [illegible] pointing the Committee, and [illegible] be that there was nothing [illegible] quire into. The scheme of [illegible] mittee divided their inquiry [illegible] portions—one part being an [illegible] matters of fact as to what did or did [illegible] happen [illegible] Campaign of 1882, [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] Comm[illegible] upon matter[illegible] Marquess just no[illegible] was not complete. [illegible] dence was anxiously [illegible] never came. But the not[illegible] the Secretary of State for [illegible] like to have that evidence b[illegible] Committee. Well, it was not [illegible] (Colonel Milne-Home) or for any[illegible] say what would transpire in Egy[illegible] during the next few months; but he knew from the newspapers that the troops were going into summer quarters, and would remain inactive for some time; and surely it would be possible to find a General to relieve Lord Wolseley for a time; meanwhile the latter could come home and give the Committee the desired evidence. As to the second portion of the inquiry, whether there should be any alteration in the Commissariat Department, it was the almost unanimous opinion of witnesses before the Committee that, whether they were agreed there was a breakdown in the Egyptian Campaign or not, there were many alterations that should be made in the organization of the Commissariat establishments. He knew himself of many officers in the Service who would be extremely glad to see some alterations carried out, and who would be happy at a future time to give evidence in that direction. There was, then, every reason for the re-appointment of the Committee, not only to finish the evidence on matters of fact, but also to go on with the second portion of the inquiry. He was sure he could speak for every Member of the Committee in saying that if it appeared

and Transport Departments. He should certainly support the proposal that the Committee should sit again.

MR. CARINGTON said, he would only intervene for the purpose of asking a question—whether the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War would object to the re-appointment of the Committee after Easter, when, if we had no further complications with Russia, and if our troops in the Soudan went into summer quarters at Suakin and elsewhere, the War Office officials might with a very little pressure assist at the inquiry?

DR. FARQUHARSON said, he would also ask the question if the Department would be satisfied if the inquiry were resumed after Easter, when the hurry of preparation would have passed, and the Department would have sufficient time for the evidence required? He did not see how the Department could be better worked than by supplying information to the public, clearing up the doubts and difficulties that had arisen in connection with the various expeditions undertaken. A good deal had been said about the evidence of Lord Wolseley; and, no doubt, it was important, though he should not have thought it of extreme importance, for the Committee had already had the evidence of Sir John Adye, the Chief of the Staff during the late campaign in Egypt, who would know a great deal more about the matters to be inquired into than Lord Wolseley—as, indeed, had been admitted by Lord Wolseley himself; and that witness certainly, so far as he could, laid the whitewash upon everything to please the Government. The labours of the Committee would be thwarted if they were not allowed to report. Without a Report the Blue Book would have no real authority. It must be remembered that the case of the Committee was very much prejudiced by the statement—probably inspired—which appeared in *The Times* some time ago. That might be regarded as the Government Report, and it was followed by a Supplementary Report from the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron); but what the House wanted was the Report of the Committee holding the judicial balance between these—the summing up of the long inquiry. The contention had been put forward that the breakdown, if breakdown there was, was due to the exigencies of military operations, and he was not disposed to deny that much might be said upon that view; but they must also consider whether somewhat was not also due to faults in the system which had been indicated by military officers. As had been pointed out, there were two sections of inquiry—the facts in regard to the present system, and the question of organization. The second part of the inquiry did not depend on the success of the first; the second inquiry followed the first as a mere matter of sequence. It would be much better if the Committee were allowed to meet again to consider their Report on the first part of the inquiry, and then to discuss whether it was necessary to go on with the subject of organization or not. The Committee had been almost unanimous in their desire for re-appointment; and he hoped the Government, on consideration, would see fit to grant the request.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 49; Noes 68: Majority 19.—(Div. List, No. 63.)

DR. CAMERON gave Notice that, in consequence of the Vote just taken, he would call attention to the matter again on the Motion to go into Committee on the Army Estimates.

TOWN PARKS IRELAND.

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. T. A. DICKSON, in rising to move—

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the tenure of holdings known as Town Parks in and near towns in Ireland, how they are affected by the Land Acts of 1870 and 1881, and to report if any changes in the existing Laws could be beneficially made,"

said, his object in moving for the Select Committee was to obtain an inquiry into the law which now regulated Town Parks in Ireland. At present conflicting decisions were give in the Law Courts, and, as a consequence, great uncertainty existed. He did not intend to take up the time of the House at that late hour (1.30) by going into details; but he might observe that the question of Town Parks had been an open question ever since the passing of the Land Act in 1881. When the Land Act was being passed, the Prime Minister said that the whole question connected with Town Parks in Ireland was one deserv-

Minister was most careful not to limit himself to matters of organic structure in the Bill, but distinctly covered the whole ground. Even more recently than that the late Chief Secretary Mr. Trevelyan pronounced himself on this subject. Last year that right hon. Gentleman said that Her Majesty's Government, after a full and final consideration of the subjects at issue, had come to the conclusion that it would not be safe for the Government to re-open the question, and that there was only one essential particular in which the Government had not said its last word, and that was the question of the purchase of holdings. He (Mr. Brodrick) therefore concluded that this was an entirely new departure on the part of the Government—he would not say that it amounted to a breach of faith on the part of the Government, but it amounted to a distinct change in their former determination. He believed that the pledge, of which this Motion was the outcome, was given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), whom he did not now see in his place, at an advanced hour of the morning, when it was not known even that the Motion on which he was speaking was about to come on. It would have been but courteous to the House for the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to have been present on this occasion, to explain this extraordinary change of policy on the part of the Government. If the Government were prepared to allow the Select Committee, he (Mr. Brodrick) and his hon. Friends would have a perfect right to move for Select Committees to inquire into half-a-dozen subjects on which they felt they had been grossly ill-treated, and in which their interests had been equally neglected. He did not wish now to enter into these subjects; but if they were to be re-opened at all, he and his hon. Friends would get their heads in at the door as well as other people, and they would introduce questions on going into Committee of Supply—and, indeed, on every occasion when they could occupy space and time belonging to the Government. If the hon. Gentleman the Member for Tyrone succeeded in passing his Motion, he (Mr. Brodrick) would certainly move for a Select Committee to consider the position, status, and occupation of the Sub-Commissioners appointed under the Land Act; and he believed in such a Motion he would receive support from the Irish Gentlemen sitting below the Gangway. Again, he saw no reason why they should not open up the question of the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act, and ask Parliament to consider why those clauses had been wholly inoperative. He did not see why the Emigration Clauses, on which so much stress was laid by the first of the numerous Chief Secretaries (Mr. Forster who had officiated under this Government, had not been put into operation; and why the absurdly inadequate sum advanced by Parliament to promote emigration had not been used and needed. Parliament would require to be assured that every effort had been made to carry out what they were told were the most important and necessary clauses of the Bill. Now, these were a few of the questions which he and his hon. Friends certainly would raise if the Government showed any signs of giving way in this particular. This Motion was only in a very minor degree directed to the needs of the tenant-farming class in Ireland. It was chiefly directed to the needs of the well-to-do butchers, who drove their cattle to the market towns, and who occupied the town parks, sometimes by the year, and sometimes for a shorter period. He submitted, therefore, that this was not a question which, even from the point of view of those whom the Land Act was chiefly intended to benefit, should be re-opened and re-settled. If the deficiencies in this immortal piece of legislation—the Land Act—which they were told was to gratify the pockets of the tenant farmers, and amuse their minds with litigation, were responsible for the present disaffection of the Irish people, most unquestionably the Motion of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Tyrone was wholly inadequate, and absurdly inefficient to supply the need. To re-open the question in a manner which could not possibly tend to any good end it would be most unwise for Parliament at this moment to do. So far as this immediate Motion went, he should give it his most sincere opposition. He had referred to the speech in which the Prime Minister expressed his view of the question. The

pleaded only their inattention to the proceedings of the House, and a conspicuous manifestation of dulness. As a reason for the adjournment of the debate, and for not proceeding with the consideration of this question at the present moment, it had been said that the Beresborough Commission had, some time ago, considered the question, and that it was desirable that the effect of their inquiry should be ascertained. Well, he Mr Sexton would ask the House to bear in mind that this subject had been dealt with already during the present Sittings; that the Government were present when it was considered, and had declared their views fully upon the subject; and that hon. Members who did not care to attend the proceedings of the House, and who were not present on that occasion, were not entitled to plead their own ignorance.

Mr. PLUNKET said, he hoped the Government would now consent to the adjournment of the House. He ventured to say that there was no hon. Member present who remembered a proposal so important as that which had been made by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. T. A. Dickson) being assented to in a thin House, and under circumstances such as the present. No explanation whatever had been given upon the subject; and he Mr. Plunket contended that, under the circumstances, it was most unusual, and would be an evil precedent, to grant a Committee on a subject of this kind at such an hour. The Motion now before the House was not for the rejection of the proposal for the appointment of the Committee, but that an adjournment of the House should be taken, and that the debate upon the Motion of the hon. Member for Tyrone should be postponed until such time as a fair opportunity could be afforded for the discussion of the questions which arose upon the Resolution.

Mr. FINDLATER said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just sat down Mr. Plunket had evidently forgotten the observations of the hon. Member for Sligo Mr. Sexton. He (Mr Findlater had been present during the last occasion this question was before the House, and he distinctly recollected every circumstance which had taken place, and which he could vouch had been most correctly detailed by the hon. Gentleman. It could not be fairly contended that the House was now taken by surprise, as the matter had been fully discussed on the last occasion.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, that everyone knew perfectly well what the right hon. and learned Gentleman Mr. Plunket meant by asking the House to postpone the consideration of this subject. Next time this question came on, they would find themselves confronted by a blocking Motion put against the proposal by one of the many Conservatives whose sole occupation in the House seemed to be the putting down of Motions of that kind. ("Oh, oh!") He did not refer to the hon. Member for Cambridgeshire (Mr. Hicks), who seemed to occupy his time that evening in making inarticulate utterances. He Mr. T. P. O'Connor must express his surprise at the language of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Dublin University, who had given a lecture in taste to the hon. Member for Sligo. The right hon. and learned Member had declared that the hon. Member had not conducted himself in a mannerly fashion —

Mr SPEAKER: I must say that the remarks of the hon. Gentleman seem to me to have nothing to do with the Question before the House.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he was simply replying to the remarks the right hon. and learned Gentleman had thought fit to make upon the speech of his hon Friend the Member for the county of Sligo; but as Mr. Speaker had ruled that he Mr. T. P. O'Connor had no right to reply to those observations he would drop that part of the subject. He hoped the Government would strenuously resist the attempt of Conservative Members to defeat the appointment of this Committee. The Government had pledged themselves to support such a Motion as that now brought forward by the hon. Member for Tyrone. As the hon. Member for Sligo had pointed out, the Government had practically stated, when a kindred Motion to that of the hon. Member for Tyrone was before the House, that if such a Motion as the present were brought forward it would receive their support. Well, the Government had now an opportunity of carrying out their pledge, and he should be very much surprised if they allowed themselves to be intimidated from the course they had

Business think that this Motion can well be agreed to, and the question disposed of, if desired, at once. At the same time, I would advise the hon. Member for Tyrone, seeing that the Government agree to the appointment of the Committee, to consent to a postponement, on the understanding that hon. Members opposite will abstain from obstructing the Motion on future occasions. I would not press my hon. Friend to take that course until such a disposition on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite is more clearly manifested than it is at present.

MR. BRODRICK said, that if there were a disposition on the part of himself and his hon. Friends clearly manifested, it was the disposition for them to oppose the Motion for the appointment of this Committee, at that hour and under existing circumstances, as strenuously as lay in their power. The hon. Member opposite (Mr. T. A. Dickson) had simply a bare quorum of the House at his back —a bare quorum which at any moment might be reduced below a quorum. He put it to the hon. Member if it was not a most unusual course to take, when those whose opinions had been quoted on both sides of the House as being opposed to the Motion were not able to be present—was it not a most unusual course, under such circumstances, for the hon. Member to press the matter forward? Hon. Members on the Conservative side of the House were bound to offer to the course the hon. Member seemed determined to pursue all the opposition they could, and they would continue to offer that opposition until they could show the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) that their's was a substantial and a genuine objection. If the noble Marquess would take the side of reason in this matter, he would see that the ends of reason would best be served by adjourning the discussion until it was possible for those who were in authority to consider the matter. An expression of opinion had not been yet received from that quarter. He could not say that he thought that a single argument had yet been brought forward against the adjournment of the discussion except that of the hon. Member (Mr. Lea), who said that the Motion might be blocked on a future occasion. Well, if that were so, the very object of blocking a Motion was to prevent its coming on at a time when justice could not be done to it. For his own part, he would continue to resist the Motion, if necessary, till 5 o'clock in the morning, in order to secure its coming on at a time when it was possible to have a full and fair discussion upon it

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 18; Noes 43: Majority 25.—(Div. List, No. 65.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. HICKS said, he begged to move that the debate be now adjourned. It would be in the recollection of those Members who were present on Friday night that at a much earlier hour than this—in fact, at only a little after half-past 12 o'clock—the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice) had said that it was too late to answer Questions. Now, if it were too late to answer Questions at half-past 12 o'clock, surely it was much too late, at nearly half-past 2 o'clock, to go into a question of such importance as that involved in the Motion of the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson). The House could not forget that this was a part of a great question which had occupied the attention of the House for a whole Session—a question compared with which all other Business was insignificant; and it appeared to him that it was much too late, particularly in the absence of the principal Ministers of the Crown, to go on with the discussion. Further than that, when they bore in mind the late hour at which the House was kept up this morning, and when they remembered that they had to meet again at 12 o'clock at noon to-morrow, consideration for the officers of the House ought to induce them at once to agree to the adjournment of the debate, which he now begged to move.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he begged to second the Motion. The lateness of the hour was such that they ought not to go on with a discussion of this kind. They all knew that one result of carrying on debates at this hour in the morning was that there were no proper reports of them in the newspapers, and that the public outside consequently had no means of knowing what their Representatives were doing. Those hon. Members who belonged to England did not know as well as some other hon. Gentle-

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 18*th March*, 1885.

MINUTES.] — Public Bills — *Resolutions in Committee* — Cape of Good Hope (Railway Loan).

Ordered — *First Reading* — County Justices' Clerks * [98]; Parliamentary Elections (Returning Officers) * [99].

First Reading—Peasant Proprietary and Acquisition of Land by Occupiers (No. 2) * [97];

Second Reading—Local Government Provisional Orders * [91]

Committee—Parliamentary Elections (Redistribution) (*re-comm.*) [49]—R.P. [*Sixth Night*].

QUESTIONS.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE, who had the following Question on the Paper:—

"To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can now state the provisions of the International Agreement with regard to the Finances of Egypt,"

said: Since I put this Question on the Paper, I have received a communication from the Prime Minister stating that the Agreement will not have been actually signed at the moment of the meeting of the House, and that, therefore, its provisions could not be publicly stated. But perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer can tell us exactly how we stand in the matter; when he will be able to make a communication with respect to the Agreement; and if he can say when he expects to bring the matter under the judgment of the House?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers): The position of matters with respect to this Agreement is this. The Agreement consists of a Declaration and a Convention. The Declaration was signed yesterday; the Convention will not be signed until this afternoon. I hope at half-past 5 o'clock, with the permission of the House, to make a statement explaining in general terms both the Declaration and the Convention. My noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has come down to state to the House when the Papers will probably be distributed; and perhaps, with reference to the second question of the right hon. Baronet, I had better make that statement. The Declaration and the Convention will be distributed either to-morrow morning, to-morrow afternoon, or on Friday early. We shall do our very utmost to have them distributed at the first possible moment. The Papers explanatory of the whole business will, we hope, be distributed on Monday; and to-morrow week I hope in Committee to move the Resolution upon which will be founded the Bill which will be necessary to carry the Convention into effect.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—THE COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

Mr. RYLANDS asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he could make a statement as to what course the Government intended to pursue with regard to the proposed Committees of Inquiry into public expenditure? He observed that the right hon. Gentleman had dropped his Notice with respect to the Committee on the expenditure of the Army and Navy Departments; but the Notice with regard to the Civil Service Department was on the Paper last night?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Childers) said, that though he should have preferred Notice of the Question in order to make a careful statement, nevertheless, for the convenience of the House, he would now say, in a few words, what the Government proposed to do. They were fulfilling a very precise pledge which they gave to the House, especially to right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, in proposing, on the very first day of the Session, to appoint Committees on the Army and Navy and the Civil Service and Revenue Departments Expenditure, which should sit during the present Session. He need not now quote *seriatim* the pledges which they gave, as he should have done in moving for the first Committee. But, in the first place, the Motions in respect to these Committees had been blocked, and the effect of the blocking had been to prevent their being taken after half-past 12 o'clock. These blocks had been persisted in; and hence it had been absolutely out of his power either to move for the Committees or to give any explanation. However, in answer to the Question, he might now say that in addition to these blocks the Government had learned from many quarters of the House that

FIRST SCHEDULE.

PART I.

BOROUGHS TO CEASE AS SUCH.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD rose to move, in page 13, column 1, line 11, to leave out "Beaumaris District) Anglesey." The hon. and learned Member said, that, in moving this Amendment he was afraid he would be met with that *non possumus* which had already been the answer to so many proposed Amendments. He considered it his duty, however, to move the Amendment, and to ask for the adoption of it by the Government. The borough of Beaumaris consisted of four contributory boroughs, of which Holyhead contained more than one-half of the entire population. It so happened that Beaumaris was the largest district of boroughs included in this Schedule. The population, according to the Census of 1881, was within 164 of the limit of 15,000; and if the Census could have been taken in such a way as to include the real population of the borough it would have considerably exceeded 15,000. The reason why there was a large difference between the number of the population according to the Census and the real number of the population was that a very large number of the inhabitants of Holyhead were persons who were engaged on board the steamers plying between that town and the Irish Coast, and whenever the Census was taken there would be necessarily hundreds of persons who were actually voters of Holyhead on the other side of the Channel. The consequence was that whenever the Census was taken the Return for Holyhead fell considerably short of the real number of the population. He thought that was one element which would justify the Government in making an exception in this case, although, in point of fact, it would not be an exception at all, because he understood that the Schedule was based on the actual population of 1881. If they were to be bound by the number included in the Census Returns, they would be equally bound, in the event of some extraordinary mistake having taken place in counting up the numbers, which would be manifestly unfair. As he had stated, the population of these boroughs was within 164 of the 15,000 limit; but the real number of the population in 1881, at the time of the Census, if the Parliamentary limits had been properly defined, would have been 18,038. Holyhead, within the limits of the Parliamentary borough, contained, according to the Census, 8,680; but the population of the parish, which was really and substantially the town of Holyhead, amounted to 9,689 according to the Census; so that if the proper boundary had been assigned to Holyhead itself the population of the borough, according to the Census, would have been 15,865 instead of 14,856. In the case of another of the boroughs, Amlwch, the Parliamentary limits included little more than half the population of the parish. There were two towns in the parish, and for some peculiar reason, in 1832, the population of one was taken, while that of the other was left out. The population of the two urban districts in that parish would give 4,817 instead of 2,664; so that without any difficulty the boundaries of two of the boroughs at present included in the district of Beaumaris might be so altered—and altered, too, with advantage, and without interfering with any principle of the Bill—as to give a population of more than 18,000 according to the Census of 1881. He thought these facts afforded strong reasons for striking out this district of boroughs from the 1st Schedule of the Bill. It must be taken into account also that Holyhead itself was a growing town, and that in the future it must necessarily become more and more important. Even since the limits of the borough were fixed it had, he believed, more than doubled its population, and since the Census of 1881 the population had increased rapidly. In all human probability the increase in the future would be very much greater than in the past, because, owing to its position, it would, no doubt, in the course of time, become a port for Transatlantic steamers just as it now was a port for the departure of steamers for the Irish Coast. When once that took place, the population, which was now more than 10,000, would in a few years be doubled, so that, in all human probability, there would in the near future be in that town alone a population of more than 20,000. A Petition, very numerously signed, had been presented from Holyhead praying that some alteration should be made in the way he had pointed out. There had also been a

that small population there would still be one Representative.

MR. RYLANDS said, there was one thing to which he should like to draw the attention of his hon. and learned Friend. He (Mr. Rylands) happened to represent an important constituency—Burnley—the population of which was between 60,000 and 70,000. While in the Bill a line had been drawn which was extremely painful, no doubt, to some of the small constituencies, and it might appear hard to take away a Member from a borough which was only 500 or 600 below the limit, still it was provided that constituencies which were above the limit of 50,000 should retain two Members, and one Representative was retained in the case of boroughs which were above the 15,000 limit. His own opinion was that the scale of population, so far as those boroughs were concerned, had been fixed in a very liberal manner. He should have preferred that all boroughs under 20,000 should have been thrown into the Schedule, and that all boroughs under 60,000 should lose one Member; but although he entertained that conviction, he accepted the Bill of the Government as a very fair and reasonable proposal; and, seeing that the arrangement had received the sanction of the Leaders of the two sides of the House, he was quite ready to give up any feeling of his own in order to carry out the arrangement made by the Government and the front Bench opposite. Some of his hon. Friends on the other side of the House appeared to be somewhat restive because they had not obtained all the terms they wished to have; but hon. Members on that—the Liberal—side of the House had made considerable sacrifices, and given up many of their cherished convictions, with a view of supporting the Government and retaining the assistance of the front Opposition Bench, without which it would be utterly impossible to pass any satisfactory measure. Under these circumstances, although there was no one in that House who had a greater regard for his hon. and learned Friend than he had, he hoped that the Committee would not listen for a moment to appeals made to it by Members of different constituencies, but that, having accepted a broad line, they would be prepared to adhere to it, although it might appear to Members somewhat hard upon certain boroughs.

Amendment *negatived.*

COLONEL MILNE-HOME said, he had placed an Amendment on the Paper in reference to the 2nd Schedule, which applied to Berwick-on-Tweed; but he had found that he would be out of Order unless he moved to omit the name of Berwick-on-Tweed in line 12 of the present Schedule. Berwick-on-Tweed had returned two Members to the House of Commons for the last 356 years; and he almost thought there was no other constituency in the country which had the same right to complain of the provisions of the present Bill as that which he had now the honour to represent. It would be well understood how, when the present Bill was published, and the borough of Berwick-on-Tweed found itself in the Schedule, it was extremely astonished at the treatment it met with at the hands of a Liberal Administration, whom they, as a rule, had done their best to serve. The Town Council drew up a Memorial and presented it to the Prime Minister, and the Prime Minister, in acknowledging it, said that he had referred it to the Boundary Commissioners, and that the terms of it should have the best consideration of Her Majesty's Government. The Town Council had appeared before the Boundary Commissioners; but the Boundary Commissioners informed them that they had no powers whatever except to settle the boundaries of the new county districts. Under these circumstances, the borough had no other course but to call upon its Representatives in that House to say what they could on behalf of its claim for continued representation in the Councils of the nation. He was quite aware that the main basis upon which the provisions of the Bill proceeded was that of population, and that the borough he had the honour to represent did not come up to the requirements of the measure; but he contended, in the first place, that it had been already laid down that population was not to be the sole basis. Already they had had exceptions in the seats given to the Universities and the City of London, thereby showing that historical associations and other sentimental considerations were held to be of some account besides that of mere numbers. He regretted that his hon. Friend

unite Berwick to Scotland for Parliamentary purposes, for he was convinced that all true Scotchmen would evince sympathy for the town of Berwick, and prefer to see this Amendment carried. He had no doubt that he should be answered, as the hon. and learned Gentleman who preceded him in regard to the case of Beaumaris had been answered, by the question—where is the extra Member to come from? He did not think it fair for the Government to ask hon. Members where the extra Member was to come from, for they had not taken him away; and it was for those who had taken him away to say where the extra Member was to come from. He would suggest that there were plenty of disloyal and some corrupt boroughs from which a Member might be taken; and he left Her Majesty's Government to select the constituency. Had this borough been in the same position as Sandwich and others, they might have allowed it to be disfranchised as a fair arrangement; but he would remind the Committee that in the case of Berwick there had been an investigation into the practices at an election some two or three years ago. The scrutiny took place at the instance of the then Lord Advocate; and it was discovered that, at all events on one side of the House, there was perfect purity; and but for that the right hon. Gentleman in question would have had a seat in the House. It was proved to demonstration that the sitting Member did not get his seat by bribery, and he hoped this fact would not be forgotten by the Committee. If he received any support at all, he should certainly go to a division in favour of retaining a Member for the ancient town of Berwick-on-Tweed.

Amendment proposed, in Schedule 1, page 13, column 1, line 12, to leave out the words "Berwick-on-Tweed."—(*Colonel Milne-Home.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the hon. and gallant Member had made a capital defence for the ancient borough of Berwick-on-Tweed; but he had proved almost too much. He had told the Committee that the borough enjoyed the special patronage of the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition, and in that case it might be well able to get on without special representation. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) would, however, point out to the Committee how serious a gap would be made in the Bill by the acceptance of any suggestion of that kind. The hon. and gallant Member did not ask for one Member only, but, in reality, he asked for four, by drawing an artificial line in favour of a borough with a population of little more than 14,000. The hon. and gallant Member, in trying to defend his own borough, had mentioned the cases of Newark, Weymouth, and other boroughs, with a still larger population, but which, nevertheless, found themselves in a similar position, and which would certainly be able to make out quite as strong a case as the hon. and gallant Member had made out for Berwick. Newark was a very ancient borough; it had always returned two Members, and it was increasing far more rapidly than Berwick. It, therefore, had a much stronger case in its favour. The hon. and gallant Member stated that his Amendment would not interfere with the principles of the Bill. He (Sir Charles W. Dilke) was astonished at that assertion, because only last night, when a question of population was raised, he had felt himself compelled to state that the limit of 15,000 was a vital principle of the Bill. He was afraid he could only make that *non possumus* answer which the hon. and gallant Member appeared to anticipate.

Amendment *negatived*.

SIR ROBERT PEEL said, he would move formally to omit Tamworth from Schedule 1. He should like to say one word, although he did not know that it would be necessary, in the shape of an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill, and to the Government, on behalf of Tamworth. It was a borough, perhaps, more ancient than that of Berwick-on-Tweed—at all events for several hundred years it had returned two Members to Parliament. He had himself had the honour of sitting for it for 30 years, and for three generations a Member of his family had represented it for nearly 90 years. He had hoped that the original plan of the Government would have been accepted by the House, and in that plan they had in-

of the division, and he hoped the Government would bear in mind the public feeling that might exist in the division. He would be very glad, however, to see the name of Tamworth attached to one of the divisions of Staffordshire.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) moved the inclusion of the Ayr group of burghs among those that should cease to return Members. He said the object of the Amendment was to dissolve the group now composing the Ayr district of burghs with the view of reconstituting them in a somewhat different way. There was a similar Amendment on the Paper by the hon. and gallant Member for South Ayrshire (General Alexander), and though he differed from the hon. and gallant Member in regard to the way in which the difficulty was to be solved, yet they were agreed that the only way of effecting certain re-arrangements in the groups of Scottish burghs, which he believed was almost universally admitted to be desirable, was by first dissolving the groups under Schedule 1, and then reconstituting them under Schedule 4 in such a way as might be thought right. The object of the Amendment standing in his name was to omit from the so-called Ayr group two of the burghs of which it consisted. At present, the group comprised the burghs of Ayr and Irvine, both in the county of Ayr, and three other burghs—Campbeltown, Inverary, and Oban—in the county of Argyll. He believed there was a unanimous opinion among the Scotch Members that this was a somewhat unwieldy group, altogether wanting in that element of identity and solidarity of interests which it was desirable to maintain, and the two burghs he proposed to omit and merge in the county were Oban and Inverary. As regarded Inverary he would say nothing. He believed there was a universal feeling among the Scotch Members that small places under 1,000 population, especially if decreasing, were scarcely worthy to continue as members of groups of burghs. [Mr. RAMSAY: No.] Well, that was very generally the opinion. In regard to Inverary, the state of the matter was this—its population in 1871 was 902, and in 1881 it was 864, so that it was a decreasing place; and it was eminently what might be called a county town. It was the town of the county, and therefore it seemed very appropriate that it should form part of the county of which it was the county town, and it was without interests or pursuits separate from those of the county. With regard to Oban, although the population was larger, he believed there was a widespread feeling to the same effect, and he understood that the people of Oban itself would desire to form part of the county. Its population was increasing, no doubt. In 1871 it was 2,413, and it was now 3,991. It was a very prosperous place; but it was, as was generally known, identified with the prosperity of the Northern part of the county of which it formed a portion. That was the object for which it was proposed to dissolve the group. Of course, it would be for the Committee to consider, when they came to Schedule 4, whether this was a proper object; but he supposed that, before dissolving the group, the Committee would require to form, at all events, some sort of provisional opinion as to whether this object was a right and proper one. The hon. and gallant Member for South Ayrshire (General Alexander) proposed to dissolve the group for a totally different object; and when the time came it would be his the Lord Advocate's duty to dissent from the hon. and gallant Member's proposal, which was to include the burghs of Ayr, Irvine, Campbeltown, Galston, and Old Cumnock. The question would be an open one, and he would at present only submit to the Committee that it was reasonable that this group should be dissolved, with a view to its reconstruction when the Committee came to deal with Schedule 4.

Amendment proposed,

In Schedule 1, page 13, column 2, line 46, after the word "Scotland," to insert the words,—

"Ayr District of Burghs) | Ayr and Argyll."
—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

GENERAL ALEXANDER said, it would perhaps be convenient to the Committee that he should explain, as he had an Amendment on the Paper in terms identical with that which had been moved by the Lord Advocate, why he proposed that the existing group of

county he would mention that at the General Election of 1868 he was himself beaten by a majority of only 25, but succeeded in carrying the two next Elections. He had no doubt that if the constituency was to be left in its present position the Liberal Party would greatly preponderate, owing to the large number of small towns which were scattered here and there throughout the division. He would repeat that his only object in the proposal he would have to make later on was not to jerrymander the constituency, but to secure a fair distribution of political power between the urban and the rural interests; and he hoped that upon this occasion the right hon. Baronet the President of the Local Government Board would yield to the fair request he made.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that he was opposed to the scheme of the Lord Advocate as a whole; but he did not propose to submit his general objections in connection with this Amendment, because this proposal was almost the only one in regard to which it might be fairly said there was a general agreement. The present proposal was to throw out of the Ayr group and into the county of Argyll two small burghs —Inverary and Oban—and he believed there was a general feeling in favour of taking those burghs out of the Ayr group. But what he wanted to say was that the Lord Advocate had taken a very dangerous course in the peculiar form in which he had placed the Motion on the Paper. It was proposed to destroy and resolve into their original elements the existing groups of burghs, and then to reconstitute them in a different way. There were few who did not think that there ought to be some change, but very few indeed were agreed as to what that change should be; and the consequence of this might be that the Lord Advocate would unite in support of his proposal many hon. Gentlemen who took diametrically opposite views in regard to it. That had already been shown by the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member for South Ayrshire (General Alexander) in answer to the observations of the Lord Advocate in introducing the Motion. It appeared to him (Sir George Campbell) that if the Government pressed the plan, a great deal of trouble would result. He thought the general question of the Government proposals might be fairly raised upon this Amendment, because it would be seen at once that it would be impossible to deal with one group of burghs without dealing with others. Of course, as there was a general agreement as to the two burghs of Inverary and Oban, he would not oppose the Amendment, but would simply sound a note of warning in reference to the larger question which would still have to be raised.

MR. BUCHANAN said, he desired to make a few general remarks in regard to the Lord Advocate's scheme which had been laid before the Committee by Her Majesty's Government. The proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman did not thoroughly remedy any of the main defects that existed in the present distribution of representation in Scotland. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Sir Charles W. Dilke) intended to oppose, on the part of the Government, any addition to the existing groups in Scotland. That was satisfactory. On the other hand, the Lord Advocate only proposed that burghs under 1,000 inhabitants should be merged in the counties. He did not think they ought to allow a proposal of that sort to pass without a protest, on the ground that it could not be considered adequate or consistent with sound principles that only burghs under 1,000 should be so dealt with. The figure should be placed much higher. He had always contended that the same population standard should be applied in Scotland as in England, and that it should be applied not to the population of the groups, but to that of the separate contributory burghs. Again, he found that under the Bill the average county constituency would be 52,000 odd, the average burgh constituency 63,000 odd, and the grouped burghs only 10,000 odd, so that they had a disparity between the district burgh constituency and the large burgh constituency of over 20,000, and practically the representation of the large burghs to the small was as two to three. He regretted that the Lord Advocate in his scheme had done nothing to remedy this disparity in the representation of Scotland. On the contrary, it would be aggravated; for, under his scheme, the average constituency in the grouped burghs would be reduced below

them, by their treatment of the subject. When, as they went on, they came to particulars, he should have to give an illustration of that aggravation of anomalies. The hon. Member for Edinburgh complained of the disparity in the numbers of population in counties, and he said that it was very undesirable there should be such great disparity of population between the counties which were each to return one Member. Yet he had not one word to say in regard to the disparity of population as between burgh and burgh. The hon. Member was perfectly content to have the Inverness burghs with a population of 25,000, the Wick burghs with a population of —well, he did not know how few—and other groups with an enormously large population; nor had he a word to say as to the disparity of population between the burghs and the counties. In one case, which had already been mentioned, it was proposed that a group of burghs should remain with a population of 29,000, while the county of itself would be left with a population of 83,000 or 84,000. He certainly did not understand the inconsistencies of the hon. Gentleman in the matter, for at the same time that he pointed out these anomalies he congratulated the Government on their successful effort to deal with the anomalies of Scottish representation. He did not intend, at the present moment, to enter into all the particulars of the case; but he thought this method of procedure, first to destroy and then to revive, was peculiar, to say the least of it. So long as he understood the principles on which the Government proceeded, he did not propose to object to their mode of action; but he was anxious to guard himself against expressing anything in the shape of approval. One word with regard to a remark which had fallen from his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for South Ayrshire (General Alexander). He objected entirely to what was called the "ewe lamb" argument, and he was not at all willing to rest the case on the ground of an appeal to pity. He was not conscious of requiring pity, and he did not plead the cause of the Conservative Party in reference to the Bill upon any such ground. When the proper time came he should be perfectly content to rest his case on what he regarded as the justice of it. He was perfectly content even that the counties, in time to come, should have a larger population than the burghs; and his only desire was that in some small measure they should adjust the inequalities that at present existed, and that would be increased by this measure, between the populations of the counties and of the burghs.

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir Arthur Otway, as this debate has touched upon some of the most important points in the representation of Scotland, I propose to say one or two words early in the discussion which I think ought to be said, especially after some of the speeches that have been made. The hon. and gallant Member for South Ayrshire (General Alexander) made the only remark about it in the course of this debate to which I shall take objection. He seemed to have on his mind the impression that we made a charge of jerrymandering, as he called it, against his Party. All I can say is, that we consider that his Party have, throughout this Bill, so far from behaving in a spirit that could be characterized by that disagreeable slang word, behaved in the most equitable, public-spirited, and patriotic way. On the other hand, while I think he is quite right to repudiate that charge, I do not think he has any ground for bringing such a charge against the Government, least of all with regard to Scotland.

GENERAL ALEXANDER: It was the hon. Member for Stirlingshire (Mr. Bolton) who brought the charge against the Conservative Party last Wednesday.

MR. TREVELYAN: My business is with the Government, and I am glad to have an opportunity of repudiating at once any such idea as existing in our own minds—if it could be suspected for a moment that such an idea did exist In regard to ourselves, we certainly have no reason to try to jerrymander Scotland We are anxious to leave the election of Members to the broad public opinion of Scotland, quite satisfied that in whatever shape Scotland is cut up, it would never tolerate, in the long run, a bad Government, whether that Government be Liberal or Conservative. My hon. and gallant Friend the Member for South Ayrshire (General Alexander) said that my right hon. Friend (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who was not in his place at the moment—although it was

almost the only moment he was not to be found in his place during these discussions—had dealt in an objectionable manner with the question of taking towns that hitherto had formed parts of the counties out of the counties and putting them into the groups of burghs. My hon. Friend the Member for Buteshire (Mr. Dalrymple) spoke with more particularity as to the position of my right hon. Friend. He said that my right hon. Friend had stated that this question of taking towns which have hitherto formed parts of counties out of the counties and putting them into groups of burghs was an open question. But what my right hon. Friend meant by that was quite clear to those who heard him, and especially to those who sit on the Treasury Bench. What he meant was that it was not a question which entered into the agreement between the two Parties. My right hon. Friend reminds me that the words he used were that the matter was "open to the Committee." That is an exact statement of the case, stated with perfect precision. The question did not enter into the agreement that has been so often referred to between the Leaders of the two Parties, and therefore the Committee was in a position to deal with it as it would. But that does not mean that the Government consider it, so far as the Government is concerned, an open question. They are perfectly firm on this point, that a vital principle of the Bill—not as forming part of the agreement, but as forming part of the Government view of what a redistribution scheme should be—is that small towns in Scotland which have formed parts of the counties hitherto shall remain parts of the counties, and shall not be taken out of the counties and placed in the burghs. I do not want to emphasize this by adding words at this moment; but it is quite impossible that any form of words which I can use should exaggerate the strength of the opinion which the Government entertain on this subject. Why, Sir, the hon. and gallant Member seems to think that the counties in Scotland have been ill-used. Ill-usage, under this Bill, means that each Member represents an extra large population. Well, what is the case? In Scotland every burgh Member represents 53,800 people; every county Member represents 52,900 people; so that the slight difference which exists—because it is a very slight difference—tells against the burghs, and not against the counties. "Oh, but then" it is said—my hon. Friend the Member for Buteshire (Mr. Dalrymple) says so—"that is all very well; but there are such very great anomalies in the way the seats are distributed." He speaks of these small groups of burghs of 17,000 inhabitants. But you must have anomalies in any Redistribution Bill, and these anomalies tell quite as much in the case of the counties as in the case of the burghs. What constituency does my hon. Friend sit for? He sits for the constituency of Bute, and the population of Bute is, I believe, about 17,000—that is as near as possible the population of the smallest group of burghs which has been retained in this Bill.

MR. DALRYMPLE: May I be allowed to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman? I did not complain of the system; but what I commented upon was the inconsistency of the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan), who had so much to say about the inequality between the counties, while he had nothing to say about it in the case of the burghs.

MR. TREVELYAN: I quite understand the manner in which that allusion was brought in by my hon. Friend opposite; but I am bound to say that I think he has brought a charge against my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) which cannot be maintained, because the next point I was coming to was the complaint of my hon. Friend the Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) that there were some very great anomalies in our distribution scheme as regards the burghs. The hon. Member for Edinburgh says that the single-burgh seats are very ill-used as against the groups of burghs. He stated that the disparity between the district seats and the single burghs in regard to population is as between 40,000 and 60,000—a matter of two to three. Well, in this world you cannot have perfection; but it is a very great thing if a Redistribution Bill takes a step, and a very great step, in the right direction, and I quite agree with my hon. Friend as to what the right direction is. Now, what step has this Bill taken? While my hon. Friend was speaking I made a

very rapid mathematical calculation, which I think, on the whole, will hold good. At the present moment the single-seated burghs are in this position—there are 11 seats for 1,120,000. I daresay the calculation is not precisely accurate, but the figure is something like that—that is to say, that at the present moment in the single-seated burghs there are 100,000 people to every Member. This Bill has reduced the number from 100,000 to 60,000 for every Member, and I must own that that is a very great step in the right direction. At the same time the Bill, by the extension of two small groups of burghs, has somewhat raised the amount of population allowed to every Member in the groups of burghs.

MR. BUCHANAN: The figures I gave were the figures for Scotland under the Bill.

MR. TREVELYAN: I quite comprehend my hon. Friend's meaning. The hon. Member pointed out what is undoubtedly a great inequality and anomaly, and I was only showing that the Bill goes far to correct what was a very much greater anomaly and inequality in the same direction. The hon. Member for Buteshire (Mr. Dalrymple) quoted the words and endorsed the complaint of the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) that the Government proceed upon no principle in this Bill. I myself did not think the hon. Member went quite so far as the hon. Member for Buteshire (Mr. Dalrymple) thinks he did; but I am bound to say that when that remark was made by my hon. Friend opposite I did not hear one single cheer from these Benches, except from the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell).

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I rise to explain that what I understood my hon. Friend to say, and what I cheered, was not that the Bill was bad and unequal, but that the new scheme of distribution brought in by the Lord Advocate increased the existing inequalities and did not decrease them.

MR. TREVELYAN: Then the remark which the hon. Member cheered was practically that the scheme of the Lord Advocate proceeded on no principle. [SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Hear, hear!] At any rate, he cheers that now. I was very much alarmed at what was contained in that cheer, for I stand before the hon. Member in the position of a victim. The hon. Member has scheduled my own constituency with that of my hon. Friend the Member for Dumfries (Mr. Noel), and I am waiting with great terror to ascertain what the nature of the charges are which he will bring against us to justify our immolation. But I cannot acquiesce either in the justice of the remark of the hon. Member for Buteshire (Mr. Dalrymple) or in the cheer of the hon. Gentlemen (Sir George Campbell). I maintain that the Government have gone upon principle in this Bill. The main principle in this Bill is that they shall take the greatest step which can be made in the direction of giving representation in proportion to numbers, which is the only principle on which any good Redistribution Bill can possibly go, and, more than that, that it shall no longer be said of Scotland that the most wealthy and intelligent districts—if in Scotland one district can be more wealthy and intelligent than another—shall be under-represented to a degree that absolutely constitutes a national scandal. Well Sir, the Bill has gone upon that principle, and I think it has very fairly carried it out. As to the details by which these changes are to be made, it is quite necessary—in fact, it is the only process by which it could be accomplished—that the burghs that are to be dealt with should first be put in this Schedule of disfranchisement and then in the Schedule of enfranchisement. It is the course which was adopted in the case of a Welsh borough. It is a course which, at the very least, avoids a monstrously cumbrous heap of Amendments; and it is extremely probable, in the opinion of those who have inquired into the matter, that however cumbrous the Amendments may be even yet, the object could not be carried out by any means except that which has been adopted by my right hon. Friend.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I do not rise to challenge the observation of the right hon. Gentleman as to this being the most convenient manner of dealing with the question. I daresay it may be—perhaps it may be the only method in which the matter can be dealt with. But there are some inconveniences in the way that the question presents itself. But I do see one great advantage in the manner in which the Government are proceeding, and that is, that it has enabled us, at the very com-

of 42,000. What he proposes is that two police burghs should be taken out, thereby reducing the number of the county population by 8,000, and that that population should be added to the burgh population, raising it to 50,000. That would give—for the county 82,000, and for the burghs 50,000. That seems, on the face of it, to be such an extremely reasonable proposal — though I do not say it may be necessary to admit it, and there may be an answer to it—that we want some better answer to it than to be told, as we were by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), that the Government had laid down the principle not to introduce burghs into groups when they were not in groups already. It seems to me that it is an utterly unreasonable position for the Government to take up, that it is contrary to the real meaning and intention of the measure as a whole, and so contrary to the spirit of the agreement that was made in regard to other proportions of the Bill, that I do hope, as we proceed in the discussion of this question, we shall find that the Government have not tied their own hands unnecessarily by laying down principles for which, as far as I am aware, they have given no reason whatever, and that they will not be shut out, by their own act, from giving fair, reasonable, and candid consideration to questions which may be raised on this subject.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote) in his remarks spoke of the proportions in Scotland of county and burgh populations. He spoke generally of the agreement as to certain rates of proportion regulating the representation of counties and burghs. He also asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) by what argument he could justify the views he had expressed to the Committee. It seemed to him (Sir Charles W. Dilke) that one of the strongest arguments which existed was that which his right hon. Friend (Mr. Trevelyan) glanced at that day—namely, the question of the various county and burgh populations. The scheme of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Dalrymple) was to take burghs and towns out of the counties and add them to groups of burghs in Scotland. In England and Wales they gave by the Bill one Member to every 53,100 people in counties, and one Member to every 52,900 people in boroughs—the average for the counties and boroughs together being one Member to every 53,000 exactly. In Scotland, by the Bill, they gave one Member to every 52,900 in counties, and one Member to every 53,800 in burghs, the proportion for counties and burghs together being one Member to every 53,300. At the present moment in Scotland there were 32 county and 26 burgh Members. By the Bill they slightly, but very slightly, decreased the county population, and very slightly increased the burgh population, giving 39 Members to counties and 31 to burghs, being an increase of seven county Members and an increase of five burgh Members. The result was that the proportion came out in the way he had stated it. It was a proportion more favourable to the counties than it was to the burghs. The Scottish counties were more favourably represented than the English counties, and Scottish burghs were less favourably represented than English boroughs, and he thought these considerations ought to be present to the minds of the Committee in any proposal to reduce county population and to increase burgh population in Scotland.

GENERAL ALEXANDER observed that his constituency had a population of 90,000.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that no doubt in particular cases there were hardships, but these were caused by such cases as the constituency of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Dalrymple), which numbered 17,000.

MR. DALRYMPLE said, he was delighted at the prominence that had been given in the discussion to Buteshire. But how did the averages which the right hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) had quoted bear on the question which he (Mr. Dalrymple) brought before the Committee of the disproportion of the urban and rural element in particular counties?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he would explain how they bore on the question. Last night the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) spoke of a case where two different principles came into conflict. Taking the hon. Member's (Mr. Dalrymple's) view, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) should say two principles came into conflict—namely, his principle

Leaders of the Opposition. He was one of those who had all along objected to a compact being arranged between the two Front Benches, and therefore it was a pleasure to him to know that the Government were free upon this matter, and that they could come forward and say on their own responsibility that they made such and such a matter a vital portion of the Bill. The Government had declared that they themselves were strongly opposed to the system of grouping burghs. Allow him to say that the system of grouping was entirely due to causes which long ago had passed away; grouping was not part of the old Scottish system. Grouping necessarily arose from the provision which had to be made when 72 Royal burghs had to get representation in the Parliament, of the United Kingdom. The system did not exist in the old Scottish Parliament, because in that Parliament Royal burghs were separately represented; but when the Union was agreed upon, 72 burgh Members could not be given to Scotland, and therefore it was almost necessary to treat several burghs as one burgh. Parliament ought now, however, to be guided mainly by matters of convenience and general interest in the way in which they were to treat the groups. Where they were inconvenient, where they were widely scattered, by all means let them be merged in the counties; but where they were situated near each other, like the Hawick group of burghs, nobody proposed to disturb them. The more old-fashioned groups of burghs were found extremely inconvenient, and the Lord Advocate was doing something to mitigate the inconvenience that had been experienced. He regretted to hear his hon. and gallant Friend (General Alexander) talk of the jerrymandering desires of Members on the Ministerial side of the House. He should be very sorry indeed if Scottish Conservatism did not find proper representation in the House of Commons. He entirely differed from them on political matters; but he hoped his Conservative Friends would find themselves in the House in something like fair proportion to the number of Conservatives in Scotland. He had no desire they should not be represented. He now came to consider the particulars before the Committee. They had at present to deal with the Ayr burghs, and they were all agreed that those burghs required re arrangement. It was quite true that the county of Ayr itself required additional representation, and perhaps the county of Mid Lothian also required additional representation. But that was a matter for future consideration. It was not fair to say that they were not doing something in the right direction because they were not doing as much as might be done. He knew that English Members were hardly aware of the extraordinary character of some of the groups of burghs in Scotland. The Wick district of burghs, for instance, consisted of six burghs, scattered at great distances from each other; they were Cromarty, Dingwall and Tain in Ross, Dornoch in Sutherlandshire, Kirkwall in Orkney, and Wick in Caithnesshire. Wick itself had a population of 8,000; indeed, it was the only place in the group which deserved to be called a burgh. The St. Andrews group consisted of seven burghs, including Anstruther, Crail Cupar, Kilrenny, and Pittenweem, some of which had only a few hundred inhabitants each. Now, what was the meaning of collecting together several small burghs of that description? Why not throw them into the county and make the division the St. Andrews division of the county of Fife, which would be a very reasonable thing to do? For all practical purposes, Fifeshire would be adequately represented if it had two Members for the county and one Member for the important collection of Fife burghs. Why should a county of the area of Fife have two sets of burghs within it? Surely it would be better represented as he suggested. The question of the representation of Mid Lothian was one which some time or other must crop up. There had been an agitation in favour of breaking the connection between Leith and Portobello and Musselburgh. If, however, the two latter burghs were thrown into the county of Mid Lothian, it would be reasonable that the county should have two Members. In their consultation upstairs with the Lord Advocate, they came to no definite conclusion as to how any additional Members were to be provided. Their scheme involved an addition of 14 Members to the Scottish representation, instead of an addition of 12 Members. Everyone now knew per-

were entitled, they would, instead of nine Members, have had 21. The hon. and learned Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot) said he would not like to see the number of Conservatives diminished in the House; but, on the part of the Government, there did not seem to be any desire that the Conservative representation should be strengthened, because, instead of dealing generously in the matter, they had brought forward a proposal which in his (Mr. Orr-Ewing's) opinion was very unjust. If the Government persisted in their present ideas, they would not be carrying out the instructions which the Government had given to their own Commissioners.

SIR EDWARD COLEBROOKE said, he quite agreed with the hon. Members who had preceded him that it was quite right for them to discuss this question on the present stage of the Bill. As one of those who took a leading part in pressing the Government to revise the system of grouping in Scotland, he wished to tender his thanks to them for the manner in which they had done it. He thought the Government were not open to the charge that had been made against them of creating more anomalies than they had removed. If they were to make groups of burghs correspond as nearly as possible with the adjoining counties, they would get into great difficulties, and it would very likely end in their having to reconsider the question of the counties. They should have to make a greater approach to electoral divisions, although he should not regret that as an abstract proposition. He had had a long connection with Lanarkshire, and he was not unfavourable to a mixed constituency. He had hoped that the Lord Advocate would have been able to proceed with his scheme, and he was sorry that it had been dropped; but he would support the proposal as it now stood, and do his best to carry it out.

MR. WILLIAMSON said, the hon. and learned Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot) had animadverted, evidently without due reflection, on the grouping system in Scotland. There were only four towns in Scotland with 100,000 inhabitants, while there were a very large number of comparatively small towns. The county of Fifeshire, with which he had to do, had 60 or 70 small towns, some of them grouped in the Kirkcaldy and some in the St. Andrews districts. He thought that not only ought some respect to be paid to prescriptive and ancient right, but that the grouping system in Scotland served an admirable purpose, and worked to the entire satisfaction of the country. He hoped they would adhere to their treatment of the groups of burghs as proposed in the Bill—that was, that groups of burghs with more than 15,000, just as single burghs in England or Scotland with more than 15,000, should remain. The hon. and learned Member for Roxburghshire and the hon. Member for the City of Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) voted against the Amendment of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. A. Arnold) to extend the limit of disfranchisement to 20,000. If the extended limit had been made applicable to England, he had no doubt it would have been made applicable to Scotland too. His hon. Friends had spoken of anomalies; but the anomalies they had sanctioned in England by their votes upon the Amendment of the hon. Member for Salford were greater anomalies than any they had in Scotland. For instance, Hereford, with its 19,821 inhabitants, retained one Member; Whitehaven, with its 19,295 inhabitants, retained one Member; Grantham, with its 17,345 inhabitants, one Member; and many other places with similar populations were to have one Member each, while Birkenhead, with 84,006 inhabitants, Dudley, with 87,407 inhabitants, and Middlesborough, with 64,965 inhabitants, only had one Member each. The anomalies, therefore, to which his hon. Friends had given their sanction, were greater in England than they would be in Scotland. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the City of Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) wanted to get an additional Member for Mid Lothian; but Mid Lothian, even if Portobello and Musselburgh were taken from Leith and merged in the county, would not come up to the limit of 100,000. The county had now 78,000 inhabitants, and if Portobello and Musselburgh were merged in it it would only have 93,000. In connection with this idea of finding means to give Mid Lothian an additional Member it was proposed to throw the St. Andrews Burghs into the Eastern division of the county—

to speak — Dumfries, Kirkcudbright, and Galloway—ought to be considered in that sense. The population of those counties was 156,852, and it had hitherto been represented by five Members — three county and two burgh Members. The proposal in this Bill was to reduce that representation by one. But hitherto the proportion had been that 43,926 of the population had been represented by the two burgh Members. The proposal in the Bill, however, was to reduce the burgh population in those three counties to a total of 27,584 — namely, Dumfries, Annan, Lochmaben, Sanquhar, and Kirkcudbright—leaving to the three counties a population of 130,000. Now, as it was well known that there were many towns very much larger in those three counties than Annan, Lochmaben, Sanquhar, and Kirkcudbright, it did seem very hard that under this Bill those towns should be merged in the counties, instead of being added to the district group of burghs to which they had a natural affinity. If the Dumfries district of burghs were treated as he proposed, they would have an opportunity of adding to it the town of Stranraer, which was the largest of the burghs about to be disfranchised except Dumfries. Stranraer was a most important and growing town, it was the nearest port to Ireland, and through it the postal communication which was about to be established with Ireland would flow. That town, naturally urban in its character, was to be merged in the county, while such towns as Lochmaben and Sanquhar, and even Kirkcudbright, which, as a matter of fact, had under 2,000 of a population, were to be left in the Dumfries district. The population of Stranraer was close on 7,000, and he believed there was only one other town in Scotland with anything like that population which was about to be merged in a county; indeed, Stranraer was the only town of its importance which was about to be taken out of a burgh and thrown into a county. It had lines of railway, and had many associations with Dumfries, and it seemed an extraordinary contention that to the large county population there was to be thrown in the largest town except Dumfries in the three counties. It had hitherto been the process in Scotland to associate towns which were of an urban character in a district of burghs. He was not going to travel over the arguments which had been so well debated by the Committee already; but with regard to this matter, he would like to suggest that, in case the Government should agree to the proposal, the Dumfries district of burghs should for the purpose be opened up in Committee on Schedule 2, so as to insert other towns. The burgh of Kirkcudbright, which was the most Westerly portion of the group, had a population of 2,571, yet half-way between it and Dumfries was the town of Dalbeattie, with a population of 3,855, and the town of Castle-Douglas, with a population of 2,565. These towns, which were of much more importance than Kirkcudbright, were ignored by the Bill, Kirkcudbright being retained in the group of burghs. Similarly, on the other side, they had the fact that Moffat and Lockerbie, with 2,000 inhabitants each, were much nearer to Annan and Sanquhar, which were portions of the Dumfries group. Inasmuch as the considerable population in the three counties was about to lose one of its Representatives, he thought the Committee would agree with him that it was but right that the urban population of those counties should be united with the Dumfries District Burghs, to which they had natural affinity, and that the burgh of Stranraer, with a population of 7,000, a much larger population than any other of the burghs in the Dumfries district, should be added to it for the purpose of preserving what was desired—namely, urban representation. He had the honour of attending a large meeting in the burgh of Stranraer not very long ago, in which the question was fairly put. The meeting, in which every shade of politics was represented, desired that they should retain their urban character. What he suggested would be a very fair and proper adjustment of the representation of Dumfries and Galloway, and therefore he begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

Amendment proposed,

In Schedule 1, page 13, column 2, line 46, after the foregoing Amendment, to insert the words,—

"Dumfries District of Burghs . Dumfries and Kirkcudbright."

—(*Admiral Sir John Hay.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that this was an Amendment to which he could not assent. It had already been explained that the sole object of putting any burgh or group of burghs into this particular part of the Bill was to dissolve them. His right hon. and gallant Friend proposed this Amendment with the view of adding to the Dumfries group four towns, or rather five, for in his speech he had added Stranraer. He noticed on the Paper an identical Amendment in the name of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Kirkcaldy Burghs (Sir George Campbell); but as that hon. Gentleman only moved an Amendment on this clause, which would have the effect of dissolving the group, and had given Notice of no Amendment as to re-grouping, he (the Lord Advocate) inferred that his proposal was simply to dissolve the group.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL explained that he intended to move another Amendment.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, that, according to the Amendment on the Paper, the hon. Member would destroy the group, and revive it in no way. What the Committee had to consider was whether they were prepared to assent to either of these proposals? As regarded the first proposal, all that it involved was that to the existing group of burghs there should be added Lockerbie, with a population of 2,029; Moffat, 2,161; Castle-Douglas, 3,865; Dalbeattie with 3,865; and, according to the gallant Admiral's speech, Stranraer, with a population of over 6,000. As regarded the places referred to on the Paper, none of them were burghs, and none had hitherto been a member of a group of burghs. They were all small towns, only one, Dalbeattie, having a population of 3,000, and it was not a place with any distinctive burghal character. It had been already stated from the Government Bench that the proposal to add to the existing groups of burghs, especially by places of such small population, was one to which they could not assent. As regarded Stranraer, the case was somewhat different. Stranraer was already one of a group of burghs which had not in the aggregate 15,000 of a population, and accordingly underwent the penalty of disappearing under the Bill. Did it make any difference for the purpose of this case that they had to deal with a place which was one of a group of burghs which was to disappear? He submitted that it did not. No doubt, Stranraer was a county town, and as such would have its just influence in the county; but why that county town should be taken out of Wigton and added to Dumfries had not been shown by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay). Unless it was said that any place of 6,000 inhabitants ought to be added to something which was nearest, even though the distance might be great, he could not see any reason why Stranraer should be added to the existing Dumfries group. His right hon. and gallant Friend had, in aid of his argument, given certain statistics. He said that in the three Southern counties of Scotland — Dumfries, Kirkcudbright, and Galloway — there was a population of 156,852, and that this population was represented by three county and two burgh Members. Well, all he could say about that was that if they were all represented in these five Members, it would give 31,000 to each Member, which was very much below the average minimum; and by the reduction of 14,000 they would be still leaving the constituencies under 40,000 per Member, so that they would be still below the minimum. It came to this, therefore, that as far as population was concerned his right hon. and gallant Friend's statistics did not aid his argument, but went rather the other way—against it.

SIR JOHN HAY: My argument is not in favour of an additional number of Members.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): No; but inasmuch as an appeal was made to statistics, that would seem to show that there was good reason for taking away a Member from that county.

SIR JOHN HAY: My argument was rather to show the difference between the urban and rural population, and to show that in the new scheme the burgh population will be reduced to 27,000 from 43,900.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he had not quite presented the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's argument, which was that there would be a disproportion between the

counties and the boroughs, if they reduced the representation of 156,852 persons to four Members. The arrangement the right hon. and gallant Gentleman himself proposed would give the counties a population of somewhere about 43,000, which was considerably below the average, so that the counties would be well represented by three Members. So that, unless it were proposed to say that it has to be a sequence to the abolition of any group of burghs that they should pick up the bigger fragments and attach them to what was nearest, he should submit that there was no reason for adding Stranraer to the Dumfries Burghs; and as regarded four small towns or villages referred to in the Amendment, there was still less reason for accepting the proposal. With regard to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), if what the hon. Member meant was to destroy the Dumfries group of burghs, then he should resist that. It was quite true that the Dumfries group of burghs was a very large one. Not only was the aggregate population very nearly double the 15,000 limit; but they had in the town of Dumfries alone, according to the Census of 1881, a population of 17,092, so that they had thus got one burgh—the burgh from which the group took its name—which would stand alone under the 15,000 limit. He did not think it necessary to say more than that, inasmuch as the only result of dissolving the group would be the adoption of a new arrangement which would not be acceptable. It was quite different in the last case, where the result would be such that everyone could accept. Everyone would dissent from the result of the present proposal.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, it was only right that he should explain the Amendment to which reference had been made. He had not known whether the Government were going on with their plan, and had, therefore, thought it better to wait for the burghs to be dissolved before he put on the Paper a proposal for re-grouping them. His Amendment was the same as that of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay), although, no doubt, when they came to go into the details, it would be found that the proposals were of a somewhat different character. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan) was quite right in quoting him as having said that there was absolutely no principle in the Amendment which the Lord Advocate had put upon the Paper. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) had assured them that there were certain principles, so far as the Bill was concerned; but he (Sir George Campbell) did not think the right hon. Gentleman had attempted to show that there was any principle in the Lord Advocate's plan. He also thought the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) was perfectly correct in saying that the plan of the Lord Advocate, taken as a whole, did not cure, or go in the direction of diminishing, the inequalities in the representation of Scotland. As a matter of fact, it increased them. He refrained from going into the question of the first Amendment, because it was wholly undisputed; but the present being a contested Amendment, he thought he had a right to say a few words in explaining his general view of the Lord Advocate's scheme. It seemed to him that not only was the scheme devoid of merit, but that the only recommendation it had was that it pleased nobody. Sometimes a middle course was desirable, although it did not please everybody; but it was perfectly clear that the proposed scheme pleased nobody—except, perhaps, the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. Dick-Peddie), whose constituents would benefit by the scheme. As he had said, he objected to the Lord Advocate's Amendments, because they had no principle in them. Well, the object of his (Sir George Campbell's) Amendment was to put a little principle in them if possible. He would have been much better pleased if the Lord Advocate had not proceeded with his Amendments at all. It would be much better that they should be withdrawn. He (Sir George Campbell) would proceed to show why he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman's Amendments were, he would not say unprincipled, but to be viewed in the sense of being without principle, and how he proposed to treat them by putting a little principle in them. He did not bring forward his Amendment because he wanted to carry further the system of grouping burghs, but, if possible, to infuse into the Lord Advocate's

scheme something like equal justice—an equal measure to all, so that there could be no picking and choosing. He did not accuse the Lord Advocate of jerrymandering in an offensive sense; but he certainly thought that there was a very innocent form of political jerrymandering observable in his scheme. He objected to the scheme for various reasons. He objected to it, in the first place, because it amounted to a breach of faith in a technical sense, for he did not wish to be taken as using the word by any means offensively. The scheme was a breach of the understanding that the Committee had come to, and what it seemed to him the Prime Minister had put forward. He understood that the Bill was founded upon certain general principles—if not principles, at all events certain uniform rules. He thought the Government had rightly and wisely founded their Bill upon these rules, because, when rules were laid down and carefully followed, it was impossible that the charge of jerrymandering, or anything of that kind, could be bandied about from one side or the other. He had understood it to be a principle of the Bill that certain general rules should be followed; and he had understood from the Prime Minister, or from the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill (Sir Charles W. Dilke), that if any exception was made, or any change effected, it should only be in regard to matters to which there was very general agreement in Scotland. That was what they had been told would be the ground upon which changes would be warranted, and of course they had understood by that that it would be ascertained what the feeling of the constituencies as well as of Members was, that the feeling of the constituencies should be gauged, and that general assent having been obtained changes could be effected. Well, he altogether denied that in regard to the body of the changes the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate proposed there was any agreement whatever. So far as the constituencies were concerned, they had been kept entirely in the dark, no step having been taken to ascertain their feelings. He understood that even after this proposal had been sprung upon them, the Lord Advocate had refused to receive a deputation from the burghs—he might be wrong, but he had understood that to be the case. Then, not only had the general feeling of the constituencies been ignored, but the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate had also ignored the general feeling of the Members from Scotland. He understood that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not required general agreement or anything like unanimity among Scotch Members; but with all the power and influence of the Government at his back he had obtained the opinion of the majority, and had been satisfied with that information to carry out the particular changes he desired to make. He did not think the opinion the Lord Advocate had gathered from the Scotch Members could be at all viewed in the light of a general agreement. When he (Sir George Campbell) came to the plan proposed, he would explain how he thought it was contrary to the agreement and understanding which had been arrived at. He had already declared it to be his opinion that the plan increased existing anomalies instead of diminishing them. The feeling in Scotland had been that this proposal had died and was not to be revived. When Parliament met, there was a general meeting of the Scotch Members called together—a meeting not of a section or of some few Scotch Members, but of the whole body. Well, what happened on that occasion? Why, when they first met, it was proposed that general approval should be given to the Lord Advocate's proposal.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE: No, no!

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Yes; to the Lord Advocate's proposal there was a chorus of disagreement. Almost everyone disagreed with it, and the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs, who now expressed disagreement, was most strongly opposed to it.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE: The hon. Member is quite incorrect in his reference to me.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, the hon. Member would have the right of reply if he would be patient.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE: I approved of most of the Lord Advocate's Amendments.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that, including his hon. Friend (Mr. Dick-Peddie), almost all the Scotch Members had been opposed, or had

refused to give general approval to the scheme; but the Lord Advocate appeared to have squared his hon. Friend (Mr Dick-Peddie) by modifying the proposal with reference to the Kilmarnock Burghs. His hon. Friend, he thought, would admit that when the Scotch Members met he (Mr. Dick-Peddie) was one of the Lord Advocate's strongest opponents. This was a very important point, and the Committee should not lose sight of it. When the question touched the interests of the Scotch Members individually there was a general chorus of disapproval. Upon this the Lord Advocate changed his plan, making alterations in detail; and when he came to do this the objections of some individual Members were done away with, and it turned out that the majority of the Scotch Members found it convenient to continue loyal to the Government. Scoth Members were always loyal to their Leaders if their toes were not trodden upon. A great many of the Scotch Members at the meeting abstained from voting; but taking the Members who were loyal on account of their interests not being affected, and those who were content with what was proposed because it affected other constituencies and not their own, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate had a majority of 20 or 21 to 7 or 8 in each case. There had been, however, so little "general agreement" amongst the Scotch Members that for a long time they heard no more about the proposals. He believed that amongst the Members of the Government, even amongst Members of the Cabinet, and certainly amongst Members generally, the idea prevailed that the proposal had been dropped. However, the Lord Advocate had quite recently put it upon the Paper, and it now turned out that it had been very materially altered. The hon. Members for the Ayr and Kilmarnock Burghs had evidently been squared. Originally they had not been satisfied; but now that they had been relieved of the disadvantage of inconvenient and outlying burghs they were perfectly satisfied with the scheme. Then, what remained of the Lord Advocate's scheme? Why, two things, one being the throwing of a certain number of small boroughs into the counties. He (Sir George Campbell) should have no objection to that if hon. Members generally agreed to it; but the other part of the scheme was the re-grouping of certain boroughs, and it was in regard to these that he complained of, there being no principle in the proposal. What the right hon. and learned Gentleman had done had been, he would not say to bribe hon. Members who were opposed to him, but "to satisfy" those hon. Members who had been previously violently opposed to him. Considerable advantage had been given to what he (Sir George Campbell) might call one and a half of the three groups, the whole burden and loss being thrown on the other one and a half, which were to have only one Member. He would not enter upon the details of this scheme. They were very important to his constituency, but he would not go into the question now, as it did not come before the Committee in the present Amendment. He, however, would express a hope that the Government would not go on with that scheme. He now came to the proposal which he himself wished to submit to the Government, and to the reasons why he supported the proposal of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Wigtown Burghs (Sir John Hay)—although he would modify the effect of the adoption of the Amendment later on if it were in his power. He (Sir George Campbell) wished to make a proposal which, he thought, would put the Committee on a better footing. He maintained that what was sauce for the goose was sauce for the gander, and they ought to treat one set of burghs exactly as they treated another which was similarly situated. He would propose to abolish the Hawick and Dumfries Burghs, and to re-group them, because he believed them to be almost on identically the same footing as the Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline group, and if they re-grouped the one they ought to re-group the other.

MR. RALPH STANLEY: Sir Arthur Otway, I rise to Order. I understood that you permitted a great deal of latitude in reference to Ayr, but I ask whether it is in Order for the hon. Member to talk about every burgh in Scotland which it is proposed to group or not to group?

THE CHAIRMAN: I really think the time has come when I must call upon the hon. Member to limit his

remarks. The Question before the Committee does not relate to the plan of the hon. Member; but is to insert at the end of the foregoing Amendment "Dumfries."

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL admitted that all he had said hitherto had been somewhat wide of the Amendment. He, however, thought the right hon. Baronet in charge of the Bill would admit that it was distinctly understood that the whole of this question should be discussed at this time, so as to save time in disposing of Amendments which would come on subsequently. He had refrained from expressing his opinions generally on the first Amendment, because it was one upon which they were all agreed—that was to say, because it was not a fighting question. He now came to the particular question of his Amendment. He had special interest in these two burghs—namely, the Hawick and Kirkcaldy district. Both of them were model burghs, if he might so express it. Between the Stirling group of burghs and——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out that the hon. Member's arguments are not appropriate to this Amendment at all.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he had only one word more to say to show what his object was. The three burghs which were the direct subject of this Amendment contained the town of Dumfries, which contained a trifle over 17,000 inhabitants, so that he thought he was correct in saying that it was about identical with the burgh of Dunfermline. To both these burghs the remark of the Lord Advocate applied. They were both so large that if they stood alone and were situated in England they would not be deprived of separate representation. ["No, no!"] The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate had certainly said that Dumfries was so large that if it stood alone in England it would not be deprived of separate representation. Therefore he was justified, he thought, in saying that Dunfermline, which was similarly situated, if it stood alone in England would not be deprived of a separate representation. If the proposal he made in his Amendment should be carried, he should be glad to propose that Dumfries should be united to the Hawick Burghs. As excellent as they were at present, he thought they would constitute a still more model constituency, coming near to an equal electoral district. He had no wish to deprive the Hawick Burghs of the services of his hon. Friend, or Dumfries of the services of its Member; but he said that they might quite consistently with the other proposals of the Lord Advocate, in the case of the very small counties of Peebles and Selkirk —— ["Question, question!"]

THE CHAIRMAN: Again I must rise to Order.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I did not catch your last observation, Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member's speech has been unusually discursive. I did not interrupt him once or twice when I ought to have done so; but I really now must say that he must confine himself to the Question.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he would not further allude to the Hawick Burghs, but would refer for a moment to the Dumfries Burghs. [Several hon. MEMBERS: No, no!] The Amendment on the Paper referred to them. He would confine himself to this observation—that what he proposed was that the smaller burghs constituting the Dumfries group of burghs, following the proposal of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate as to the other burghs, should be added to the county in which they were situated, and that Dumfries itself should be added to the Hawick Burghs.

MR. DICK-PEDDIE said, he had no intention of continuing the discussion on the general question; but, as the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) had referred to him, and had said that most of the Scotch Members disagreed with the Lord Advocate, he thought it right to state that at the meeting of Scotch Members he approved almost all the Lord Advocate's proposals. He had opposed an arrangement which was proposed with regard to his own burghs, and in that matter the scheme had been modified, and he now approved of the whole of the proposal; but he thought the hon. Member hardly used Parliamentary language when he spoke of his being "squared" by the Lord Advocate.

MR. ERNEST NOEL said, he thought that the speech of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) had

nothing to do with the arrangement of the Dumfries Burghs. The hon. Member had merely taken the opportunity of expressing dissatisfaction with the scheme of the Lord Advocate—or rather with one part of it. It was a pity the hon. Member had not waited until the scheme relating to his own burgh was under discussion. The proposal of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Sir John Hay)—if it were to be taken seriously—certainly seemed to him a remarkably cool proposal. The speech of the Lord Advocate sufficiently explained how the Government could not accept the Amendment of his right hon. and gallant Friend. He proposed to make an alteration in the grouping of the burghs which he (Mr. Noel) represented, and in doing that he would take 5,000 of the population out of the county of Kirkcudbright—which had a population of 35,000—and add them to the burghs. Thus, according to his right hon. and gallant Friend's proposal, the county would be left with 30,000, while the burgh constituency he would form would be 43,000. Therefore, to get rid of one anomaly—that was to say, a burgh representation of 27,000—he would reduce the county to 30,000, and make the burgh representation 43,000. That could hardly be looked upon seriously after the speech of the Lord Advocate. He would just say one word with regard to the inclusion of the burgh of Stranraer in the Dumfries group. This burgh was in another county. It was more than three hours by rail from Dumfries; it had no real affinity to Dumfries, and really there was nothing in common between these towns. The newspapers did not circulate between the two towns. ["Yes, yes!"] Well, very few of them. The circulation of the Dumfries papers in Stranraer was very small. He had been intimately connected with the Dumfries Burghs for 17 years, and had been 11 years their Member. Yet during all that time he had never been called upon in any way to take part in any matters connected with Stranraer. Therefore, he could say confidently that there really was no affinity between this burgh, lying at the extreme end of another county, and at a very long distance from the nearest of the Dumfries group.

SIR JOHN HAY: I wish to remind my hon. Friend that we have the same Sheriff, the same Presbytery, and the same lunatic asylum.

MR. ERNEST NOEL said, there might be some things of that sort in common between the two towns; but if grouped in the way proposed for that reason, it would be found that very large districts could be brought together in the same way. But he did not feel that he could seriously discuss the question because of the speech of the Lord Advocate. If that speech had not been made, declaring the intentions of the Government, he (Mr. Ernest Noel) should have gone into the matter in detail to show how many grave objections there were to the course the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay) proposed.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 88; Noes 152: Majority 64.—(Div. List, No. 67.)

Amendment proposed, in Schedule 1, page 13, column 2, line 46, after "Scotland," insert "Elgin (District of Burghs),"—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. ASHER) said, as the Amendment of his right hon. and learned Friend affected the district of burghs which he (Mr. Asher) had the honour to represent, he wished to say a few words in regard to it. His right hon. and learned Friend proposed to insert the Elgin District in this Schedule, for the purpose of re-arranging it under the 4th Schedule by omitting the burgh of Kintore. He (Mr. Asher) had received a very strong representation from that burgh, signed, he believed, by almost every householder in it, protesting against being separated from the Elgin District, and being merged in the county of Aberdeen; but he was obliged to keep in view that one of the principles on which the Government scheme was based was that all existing burghs having a population of less than 1,000 should be merged in the counties. He was also aware that that principle had received very general assent throughout the whole of Scotland. ["No, no!"] That certainly was according to the information which he at present had. In those circumstances, though he regretted very

much that the burgh of Kintore should be severed from the Elgin District against the wishes of its inhabitants, he did not feel justified in opposing this Amendment, at least upon the assumption of the principle that every existing burgh having less than 1,000 inhabitants was to be merged into the counties. Of course, if there should be any modification of that principle by any decision of the Committee, and if any exception should be made to it, probably there was no case in which stronger gounds could be stated for making an exception than the case of the burgh of Kintore. Therefore, he reserved to himself, in the event of any exception being made to that principle, the right of raising the question again when it came up on Schedule 4; but, in the meantime, he did not feel justified in objecting to the Amendment.

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL said, he had an Amendment on the Paper to the same effect as that of the Lord Advocate; but his object was different. He would not detain the Committee at present with particulars as to the claims of Fraserburgh. He did not object to the small burgh of Kintore being dropped; but he intended to propose that in its place Fraserburgh should be added to the Elgin group for the purpose of making good workmanship, which he was sure they would all wish this Bill to have as one of its characteristics. Fraserburgh was a fishing town with a population of 6,580, and had identical interests with, at least, three of the burghs of the Elgin District. Therefore, he thought that in order to make the group a reasonable one, it was desirable that a fishing town of this kind should be added to the other burghs of the same character. He made this statement in order to show why it was that he agreed with the proposal that this group of burghs should be placed in the 1st Schedule.

DR. CAMERON thought it was rather a pity that the Solicitor General for Scotland had not got the courage of his convictions. His hon. and learned Friend spoke, no doubt, in highly deserved terms of the burgh of Kintore, yet he was willing to sacrifice it to his right hon. and learned Colleague. As to the assertion of a principle involved, he (Dr. Cameron) did not see that there was any principle at stake. It was a matter of compromise all round; and he thought it right, where such burghs as Oban wished to be merged in the counties, even if they were much above the 1,000 population limit, that they should be merged. He also thought that deference should be paid to the wishes of such burghs as came up very close to the 1,000 of population, and that did not wish to be sacrificed, especially when their neighbouring burghs did not wish to get rid of them. He had spoken because his hon. Friend the Member for the Elgin Burghs might take heart of grace when he knew that he would meet with some support, should he push any objection to this proposal to a division, in his (Dr. Cameron's) vote.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in Schedule 1, page 13, column 2, line 46, after "Scotland," insert "Falkirk (District of Burghs)."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he had every desire to save the time of the Committee. He thought he had already exhausted the general argument, and though the Chairman might have misapprehended him at the time, yet he really wished to save the time of the Committee. He only wished to say, with regard to this proposal, that it seemed to him to be one for which the Lord Advocate had given no reason, and for which he could give no reason. He (Sir George Campbell) could not imagine, if there were to be groups of burghs at all, that there could be a better group than the present Falkirk District. It contained a population of 53,000, which was the average district population, and it was what they in Scotland called a "homologous" district of burghs of the same character geographically near, and connected by railway. Putting aside the county argument, which had been abandoned by the Lord Advocate in respect of other groups, there could not be a better group than the present Falkirk District of Burghs, more like one another, or having more easy communication, and he had heard no reason why it should be dissolved.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, he should not have thought it necessary to say anything had it not been for what his hon. Friend

had just urged, because he had thought this was a point upon which there was an absolute unanimity. He believed there was still unanimity, minus his hon Friend. He could not describe this group, as his hon. Friend did, as "homologous;" he was not sure what was the meaning of the word. The group consisted of Airdrie, Falkirk, Hamilton, Lanark, and Linlithgow, being five burghs in three counties, and they were neither locally situated to each other, nor had they any identity of interest. The hon. Member for the Falkirk Burghs (Mr. Ramsay), who was not now in his place, communicated, at an early stage of the proceedings on this Bill, the absolute unanimity of his constituents in regard to this change. In what the Government proposed to do with regard to Linlithgow they gave effect to the wishes of the burgh to be merged in the county. It wanted to go in, and no one, as far as he knew, had anything to say against that. With regard to the remainder of the group, which were partly in the county of Stirling and partly in the county of Lanark, they proposed to make a Lanark group, which should consist, to some extent, of burghs of the present Falkirk group, and, to some extent, of other burghs; and that proposal, he believed, had received unanimous assent. With regard to Falkirk itself, they proposed to join it with the burgh of Stirling, both being in the same county; and that arrangement, he believed, had the unanimous assent of the population.

Amendment *agreed to*.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he had an Amendment on the Paper to schedule the Hawick District of Burghs; but he had already anticipated the whole of the argument he wished to use as to these burghs. His proposal was to the same effect as that regarding the Dumfries Burghs; but the latter fell to the ground, and he presumed this would follow. Still, it seemed to him that what was sauce for the goose in his own case was sauce for the gander in the other.

MR. DALRYMPLE said, he did not propose to economise the time of the Committee as his hon. Friend had done. He wished to move an Amendment to schedule the Hawick Burghs, with a view to a re-arrangement under Schedule 4. Something had been said as to the proposal not being made in seriousness. He could assure the Committee, however, that so serious was he in the course he was taking that he was prepared to support his Amendment by very good reasons, and, if necessary, divide the Committee upon it, notwithstanding that it had been said that the Scotch Members agreed about everything in general, but differed about everything in particular. He was anxious to do what was called "liberate" the Hawick Burghs, but for a different object to that which the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell had in view. The position of the Hawick Burghs was peculiar. There could be no more appropriate arrangement than the existing group; but it was not a large one, and its population was about 34,000. Jedburgh, which was at present one of the Haddington Burghs—which group was to be abolished—was in the very near neighbourhood of the Border Burghs. It was proposed by the Bill that Jedburgh should be flung into the county of Roxburgh, and should no longer be a Parliamentary burgh; and he proposed that this town, which was at present a Parliamentary burgh, should so continue—that it should be linked, not as hitherto with other towns far away from it, but with towns close to it, and of a similar description. Even in the course of a Scottish debate he was somewhat surprised at the use of the word "homologous," because, like the Lord Advocate, he did not understand what it meant; but instead of saying that Jedburgh was "homologous" with the other Border Burghs, he would say that it was, to a great extent, homogeneous. It had a population of 3,400, and was a manufacturing place; and, as regarded occupation, character, and other respects, it was very similar to the present Border Burghs, besides lying very close to them. He had heard it said that the proposal he made was unpopular, and it was quite possible that it might be; but he had yet to learn that a proposal was necessarily mischievous because it was unpopular. He would endeavour to mention the extreme suitableness of the arrangement he advocated. If Jedburgh were added to the Border Burghs, to which, for obvious reasons, it should

be connected, it would make the population of the group only about 38,000, or a little more, and he considered that a very fair number; and, as compared with other groups, it was a very moderate population for a group of burghs. He would have been glad to raise this question, if it were only for the purpose of eliciting an argument from the other side of the House. He was anxious to hear the argument of the hon. Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. A. R. D. Elliot), but much more so to hear the argument of his right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan). Nobody was entitled to speak upon this subject with greater authority than the right hon. Gentleman was; and he wanted to hear what was the objection to the arrangement he proposed of grouping Jedburgh with these other towns, and thus making a group which would not have an excessive population. Do not let it be said that they were proposing to pick out the towns, and have only a rural population. They were attempting to do nothing of the sort. With the hon. Baronet the Member for North Lanarkshire (Sir Edward Colebrooke), he preferred a mixed population in a county, and was no advocate for purely rural or purely urban constituencies. They were not proposing to abolish the urban element in Roxburghshire at all; they were only proposing that Jedburgh should be grouped with other burghs in close proximity to it, and which had similar industries and occupations. He would not detain the Committee further; but he should certainly ask the judgment of the Committee upon his proposal.

Amendment proposed,

In Schedule 1, page 13, column 2, after line 49, to insert the words—

"Hawick (District of Burghs)	Selkirk and Roxburgh."

—(*Mr. Dalrymple.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. TREVELYAN said, the burghs which he had the honour to represent had been introduced into the Paper of Amendments by two hon. Members. One of them was his hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), and he (Mr. Trevelyan), would deal with him first, because his arguments were extremely short, and of a pithy nature. His hon. Friend said he proposed to deal with the gander as the goose had been dealt with. Now, he (Mr. Trevelyan) objected to be called a gander; but while the hon. Gentleman was speaking he could not help thinking of some of the most pointed lines in all English satire, which referred to the Marquess of Grahame of that day. The Marquess of Grahame compared himself to a goose in the House of Commons, as his hon. Friend (Sir George Campbell) had compared himself, on the ground that by his cackling he woke the Ministers to a sense of their danger. The lines he was reminded of were—

"If right the bard, whose numbers sweetly flow,
That all our knowledge is ourselves to know,
What Sage like Grahame can the world produce,
Who in full conclave called himself a goose?
The admiring Senate, from the high-born youth,
With wonder heard the undisputed truth."

But in this case it was not an undisputed truth. He (Mr. Trevelyan) disputed it. His hon. Friend had done himself great injustice. The hon. Member was not what he called himself—he was a great and eminent administrator—and as a great and eminent administrator he must be aware that such a proposal as that of joining Dumfries to the Border Burghs did not come within the range of practical politics. He turned then to the arguments of his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Dalrymple). The hon. Member said he was extremely anxious to know what possible reasons could be given against his proposal. In the first place, he (Mr. Trevelyan) gave a general reason, which was that in their opinion the burghs of Scotland had got their full population as compared with the counties; and he repeated once more that, whereas the burgh population was to every Member 53,800, the county population was 52,900. Now, his hon. Friend said that these were not a very populous group. They might not be very populous according to some standard existing in the mind of his hon. Friend; but, on the other hand, they were a very fairly populous group as among Scottish burgh constituencies. There were no less than seven other groups of burghs in Scotland that were less populous than the Border Burghs. They must consider not only what the

population of the place was, but whether the population was growing or otherwise. Now, at the present moment the population of the Border Burghs was 37,640; whereas at the time when the late Earl of Beaconsfield picked them out from the surrounding counties, and gave them the romantic name they were now known by, they had only a population of 25,000 according to the Census of 1871. Now, when a burgh increased in 10 years from 25,000 to 37,000, it might fairly be called a flourishing borough. He doubted whether they could find, with the exception of Barrow-in-Furness, any such relative increase in the whole of the United Kingdom. His hon. Friend proposed to add to these burghs by taking a town from the county of Roxburgh—taking from the less in order to give to the greater. The county of Roxburgh had a population of 34,000, and he thought it would require a strong argument to prove that it would be right to rob the county, with a smaller population, to increase the burghs with a larger population. These arguments, he maintained, his hon. Friend did not bring forward. Jedburgh was only in some respects similar to the Border Burghs. These burghs constituted the most homogeneous constituency that could be imagined. It was a constituency of towns that were once small pleasant towns, but which had become large towns without ceasing to be pleasant, and which had increased with great rapidity by the prosperity of the tweed trade, the tweed trade also existing in Jedburgh, but not to the same extent as in Selkirk, Galashiels, and Hawick. Jedburgh was essentially a county town, and there was not one of the three towns in the Hawick group that was not very nearly twice as large as Jedburgh, and two of them were five times as large. Much as he respected the people of Jedburgh, he did not want to have them for his constituents, unless they were anxious for it themselves; but he objected to the proposal of his hon. Friend because of what it would take from the county. Jedburgh being a very important county town, on these grounds, and on the ground likewise that they were treating Scotland very differently from England by granting these district boroughs, he said that by creating and re-creating burghs of 3,000 in Scotland, when in England they made no new burgh under a figure of 50,000, they were treating Scotland, not with generosity, but with an unfairness which he thought would have a very bad effect on the constituencies.

SIR JOHN HAY said, the right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the borough which he had the honour to represent (Wigtown), and said it was impossible to ask them to do in Scotland what they did not do in England; but the right hon. Gentleman should not talk of consistency when the Government were proposing to do exactly the same thing in Wales as they were asking for in Scotland. They proposed to break up the borough of Haverfordwest by adding it to the Pembroke Boroughs, which was exactly on all fours with the case of the Hawick Burghs. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not urge consistency as being part of the Government Bill.

MR. CRAIG-SELLAR said, the hon. Member for Bute (Mr. Dalrymple) had described Jedburgh as a relic of the Haddington Burghs. As he (Mr. Craig-Sellar) had the melancholy satisfaction of representing that relic, he wished to say a word on the proposal now before the Committee. His hon. Friend must remember that although Jedburgh was a relic of the Haddington Burghs, and was a small town, it was, at the same time, the capital of the county of Roxburghshire, and on that account it was not unreasonable that the inhabitants should wish to vote in the county. With regard to the question of the popularity of the proposal, he would remind the Committee that as soon as the Bill was presented an important meeting was held at Jedburgh, and they unanimously came to the conclusion that Jedburgh should be merged in the county, and not, as his hon. Friend proposed, merged in the Border Burghs. That, he thought, was a sufficient answer to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Sir John Hay), who had made remarks with regard to Haverfordwest, where there was no desire to be merged in the county. Therefore, so long as the question of popularity had any weight, and it was popular in the borough that they should be joined to the county, he hoped the Committee would have no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that the Amendment should be rejected

SIR JOHN HAY asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman who was in charge of the Bill would explain what was the difference between the case of Stranraer and Haverfordwest?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he did not like interfering in a Scotch discussion; but with regard to Haverfordwest, he should be glad to defend it, although it was a proposal which the Government did not regard as a vital one.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE reminded the Committee that in voting upon this question the Government had laid down a most unnecessary rule for themselves, which had precluded them from allowing any towns which were not now boroughs from being formed into groups. When they were considering the question whether they were to turn what was now a new burgh into a part of a county, they must bear in mind that the Government had deliberately excluded themselves from coming to a satisfactory settlement of the matter, and creating a fair balance between urban and rural districts by the rule they had laid down.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, in regard to what had been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition, he must repeat the argument which he had already used—namely, that, as a matter of fact, they favoured counties in Scotland by the proposal of the Bill as compared with burghs. The Scottish counties were more favourably represented than the English counties, and the Scottish burghs were less favourably represented than the English boroughs.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, the answer to that seemed to him to be this—that the Government were dealing with large averages, and not considering individual circumstances.

Question put.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL, on being named one of the Tellers for the Amendment, speaking seated, with his hat on, said, he wished to vote the other way. His Amendment was entirely different in its object from that of the hon. Member, although the same in its terms.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 99; Noes 172: Majority 73.—(Div. List, No. 68.)

Amendment proposed,

In Schedule 1, page 13, column 2, after line 49, to insert the words—

"Inverness (District of Burghs)	Inverness, Nairn, and Ross and Cromarty
Kilmarnock (District of Burghs)	Ayr, Renfrew, and Dumbarton
Kirkcaldy (District of Burghs)	Fife."

—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH expressed his great regret that the Lord Advocate intended to do away with the Inverness District of Burghs. He desired to point out, however, that the object was not wholly obtained, because the burghs were contained in four counties, and the Lord Advocate had only scheduled three.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) asked leave to amend his Amendment by adding thereto the word "Elgin."

Amendment amended, by inserting after the word "Nairn" the word "Elgin."

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH said, the Amendment had now been put in proper form. He had been surprised that afternoon to hear the Solicitor General for Scotland (Mr. Asher) state that to exclude boroughs of 1,000 population was part of the original principle of the Bill. That he utterly denied, because it was not part of the original Bill; and he was happy to say that it was not one of the matters that came under the compact between the two Front Benches, nor was it a matter that interfered with the principle of the Bill. The Lord Advocate, at a meeting of the Scottish Members after the Bill was read a second time, proposed to insert in the Bill that all burghs with a population under 1,000 should be thrown into the counties. But the reason why he fixed 1,000 he had not chosen to explain. There was no magic in 1,000, and he might just as well have made it 900, or 600, or 500. Now, the Amendment would deprive the ancient burgh of Fortrose from any longer having a voice in the burghal representation of Scotland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had also mis-stated the figures in regard to the population of Fortrose; for in 1881 the population was 986—within 14 of the Lord Advocate's own limit—and

since that time the population had risen to over 1,000. The burgh of Fortrose distinctly objected to be withdrawn from the district of burghs; the county of Ross, to which it was proposed to join Fortrose, did not wish it to be joined; and the burghs of Inverness, of Nairn, and of Forres, desired it to remain connected with them. Under those circumstances, he could not believe that the Lord Advocate would adhere to the hard-and-fast line which he had laid down. Fortrose was one of the oldest of the Scottish burghs; it had a long Parliamentary history, and was so rich in common property that it had absolutely no borough taxes. It was closely associated with Inverness; and although it lay within the county of Ross, it was more intimately connected with the burgh of Inverness.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR) said, it had been already stated—and he believed it to be a very general opinion, and also a sound principle—that places below 1,000 should not remain as units of groups of burghs. Places which were so small that they had not 1,000 population would hardly come up to the dignity of burghs. Whether the principle was sound in this case it was for the Committee to judge; but they had already accepted it in other cases. He had taken the population of Fortrose from a Parliamentary Return, which showed that it was not only a small population, but that it was a decreasing population. According to the Census of 1871 it was 911, and to the Census of 1881 it was only 869. The hon. Member had said the population was going up; but he could see nothing to make it go up, considering it had been steadily decreasing for some time. It was one of the Inverness group certainly; but it was not in the county of Inverness, nor was it locally contiguous to Inverness, being separated from it by an arm of the sea. Fortrose was a small town or village in the county of Ross; and he submitted that it was more proper that it should be made a part of the county of Ross than one of a group of burghs with which it was not connected at all. He was not prepared to say that there should be a preservation of such small burghs as this; and he knew nothing to justify an exception being made in this case from the rule which had been laid down.

DR. CAMERON said, the Lord Advocate had assumed that the principle of disfranchising all those small burghs which were below 1,000 population had been affirmed; but he (Dr. Cameron) did not think it had. This was really the first case they were called upon to decide on the subject. His hon. Friend on that side of the House assured him that his figures were correct in regard to the population, and there must, therefore, be some mistake. Would it not be well for the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate to suspend his execution for a while—give a reprieve to Fortrose for a time? If not, he would vote with his hon. Friend.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he could not understand the action of the Government in this matter. If they were going to disfranchise all places under 1,000 on the ground of high principle, which the Lord Advocate had put before the Committee, why did they not also apply that principle to the Welsh boroughs? It seemed to him that they had adopted a principle which they departed from whenever they thought fit. He hoped the Committee would insist upon an explanation in this matter.

MR. A. R. D. ELLIOT said, the borough of Fortrose had been shown to be decreasing in population, rather than otherwise, and there was no reason for departing from the rule in respect to it. The fact that it had no taxes made it all the more remarkable that the population was decreasing. There had been no case whatever made out to justify the making of an exception in favour of Fortrose.

MR. GORST said, he did not like to interfere in Scotch debates; but he had been sitting there all day long endeavouring, like a drowning man, to grasp at anything like a principle he could discover. He had noticed that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board had carefully refrained from saying a single word on this matter. He had left it to the Lord Advocate and the Solicitor General for Scotland, who had shown themselves utterly at variance with one another, while both were at variance with the principle of the Bill. He did not know what had been done in Wales; but in Scotland it appeared to him that the Government were attempting to do a little bit of jerrymandering.

[*Sixth Night*]

They seemed always endeavouring to manipulate the arrangement of burghs so as to promote a Party advantage. The case put forward by the hon. Member who had moved the Amendment was a very simple one. Fortrose appeared not to want to leave Inverness; Ross had no desire that it should come to them; and Inverness wished to keep it. Then, why on earth did they want to meddle with these people at all? Unless some explanation was given by the Government, he should consider himself bound to vote for the Amendment.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, the right hon. Gentleman opposite had made a contrast between the cases of Wales and Scotland. He had already considered the case of the places in Wales which would remain with a less population than 1,000; and if anyone raised the question, he personally would not offer the slightest opposition to these places being merged into their counties, so that if all that was needed to make the Scottish principle uniform was that it should apply to Wales, he did not think that that would weigh much.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he thought the right hon. Gentleman had misunderstood what he had said. He did not expect that the same principle that was to work in Scotland should be extended to Wales; but what he did say was that unless Her Majesty's Government endeavoured to make this representation a real urban representation, instead of a mixed one, they had better leave things as they were.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE understood the argument of the right hon. Baronet; but he would point out that the question in Scotland had been already arranged by the system of grouping. In regard to what had been said by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), he would point out that the Lord Advocate had consulted on several occasions with the Scotch Members; and this proposal of 1,000 limit which had been suggested to him met with a very general, if not almost unanimous, acceptance.

MR. MUNRO-FERGUSON said, the Lord Advocate's proposals received very general approval in Scotland at first; but since he had discussed them with Scotch Representatives they had been so cut down that it would have been better if they had been allowed to remain as they were originally in the Bill. The proposal to throw Fortrose into the county had excited great discontent amongst the people. The population was not far off the limit, and the Town Council thought it might soon be raised to 1,000. He was utterly opposed to the present system of grouping of burghs in Scotland; but he thought that this 1,000 limit was such a very trifling reform that they might well wait until they got more.

MR. MACARTNEY said, he could not help agreeing with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) that there was a most extraordinary difference in the principles of the Government in accordance with whether the case under discussion applied to Scotland, Ireland, England, or Wales.

Question put, "That the words,

'Inverness (District of Burghs)	Inverness, Nairn, Elgin, and Ross and Cromarty

be there inserted."

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 166; Noes 120: Majority 46.—(Div. List, No. 69.)

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Friday*.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): I rise, Sir, to ask the permission of the House to carry out what was arranged at the beginning of the Sitting—namely, that I should make a statement now explaining what has been done with respect to the agreement as to Egyptian finance. If the House will allow me to proceed with such a statement, I will do so as shortly as I can. The agreement which has been arrived at consists, in the first place, of a Declaration by the Great Powers and Turkey; secondly, of a Convention, also by the same Powers; and, in the third place, of a project or Decree to be issued by the Khedive of Egypt. The Declaration was signed yesterday by all the Powers except Turkey, whose full powers, I am authorized to say, are on the way. The Convention has been signed this afternoon, and the Khedive has undertaken to sign the Decree.

These three instruments will be accompanied in the Parliamentary Papers by the Diplomatic Correspondence. The instruments themselves will, I hope, be circulated to-morrow, or at latest on Friday morning. We will endeavour to have them out to-morrow, and the Correspondence will, I hope, be circulated on Monday. The statement which I am now about to make is not one in the technical order of the Declaration, Convention, and Decree; but I will give their general effect and result in a manner which will, I think, be convenient to the House. I may premise it by observing that in 1882, after the events at Alexandria, it was evident that, in order to restore the finances of Egypt, that country must pass beyond the powers and limits imposed by the Law of Liquidation, and that it would be necessary to raise a large loan. The Controllers General in 1882, Sir Auckland Colvin and M. Brédif, estimated that the amount required would be £8,000,000; and they proposed, in order to obtain the necessary interest, that the Sinking Fund should be suspended. The Papers on this subject will be found in the Blue Book of 1883. In 1883 and 1884 the condition of Egyptian finance reached a very critical stage, and was the subject of careful inquiry by those who represented this country in Egypt, and by us at home; and in the early part of 1884, as this House will remember, we proposed that a Conference of the Great Powers should take place on the subject. The Conference met in the summer of 1884, and it was then agreed on all sides that an £8,000,000 loan was necessary to restore the finances of Egypt. There was also general agreement as to the amount of expenditure requisite for normal administrative purposes in Egypt; but there was a difference among the Powers as to the proper amount of Egyptian revenue, we thinking that the present scale of land tax was excessive, and that, consequently, some of the interest on the existing loans required abatement, while the French thought that the present scale was satisfactory, and that no abatement was necessary. All the Powers agreed as to the necessity of suspending the Sinking Fund. The Conference, as the House will remember, was adjourned *sine die*, and last autumn Lord Northbrook went out to Egypt to make further inquiries on this most difficult subject, and he devoted extreme care to an investigation on the spot of the questions in controversy. The results of his inquiry were most valuable, and on his return we reopened negotiations with the Powers on the subject; and after very patient discussion, lasting not over weeks, but months, of the several proposals, the course of which will be seen in the Correspondence to be circulated, I hope, on Monday, the Powers arrived yesterday at a settlement which I will describe in a few words All the Powers again agree as to the normal administrative Expenditure in Egypt, fixing the figure, subject to certain adjustments, at £5,237,000 a year; and that figure, I may say, contains one item of expenditure which will be of special interest to us—namely, £200,000 for the maximum cost of the Army of Occupation. They agree that the sum to be raised on the facts now before them should be £9,000,000 instead of £8,000,000 The Powers also admit, what we strongly urged, that the system of taxation in Egypt should be extended to foreigners; and machinery for this purpose is provided in the instrument in which the Agreement is expressed. It was also arranged that two years should be given during which we in England are to make exhaustive inquiries as to the revenue of Egypt, not only as to the proper figure of the land tax, but also as to other branches of revenue; and during these two years our proposals as to abatement of interest on the bonds have been met to this extent—namely, by a 5 per cent deduction from all coupons and a reduction of ½ per cent from the interest on our Suez Canal investment, subject in each case to repayment at the end of two years, if the result of our inquiry shows that the revenue can bear it If at the end of two years we find that a continued deduction from the coupons is necessary, the Khedive is to summon an International Commission like that of 1880, which settled the Egyptian finance at that time, and that Commission is to renew the general inquiry as to the Egyptian finance. I will advert for a moment to the loan. The Powers proposed to us that the loan should be the subject of an international guarantee. We did not ask for any such guarantee; we were willing to undertake it our-

absolutely determined and arranged so as to finally decide upon the matter, or is the Conference dependent on other considerations?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): The words of the Convention are—I am translating them from the French—

"It is agreed between the Governments that a Commission, consisting of delegates named by the said Governments, shall meet at Paris on a day in March, to prepare and draw up an Act with respect to the free navigation of the Suez Canal, and the project drawn up by the Commission will be submitted to the said Governments, who will also obtain the accession of the smaller Powers."

MR. NORWOOD asked, whether the Suez Canal arrangement would be submitted to the House for its sanction?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): It will have to be sanctioned by the different Powers.

MR. NORWOOD asked, whether it would have to be sanctioned by that House?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): No, Sir; it is not a financial arrangement.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE (RAILWAY LOAN).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

1. *Resolved*, That it is expedient to authorise the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to issue, out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom, during the twelve months ending on the thirty-first day of March, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six, the sum of Four Hundred Thousand Pounds sterling, by way of Loan, to the Government of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, with a view to the speedy completion of a Railway from Hope Town on the Orange River to Kimberley in that Colony.

2. *Resolved*, That it is expedient to authorise the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to raise the sums required for the said Loan by means of Exchequer Bonds, Exchequer Bills, or Treasury Bills, in the manner provided by the various Acts relating to the raising of Money by such Bonds or Bills.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*.

MOTIONS.

COUNTY JUSTICES' CLERKS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, Bill to amend the Law with regard to County Justices' Clerks in England, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR, Dr. CUMMING, and Mr. MOLLOY.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 98.]

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (RETURNING OFFICERS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, Bill to amend "The Parliamentary Elections Returning Officers Act, 1875," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL and Sir CHARLES DILKE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 99.]

House adjourned at one minute before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 19*th March*, 1885.

MINUTES.—SELECT COMMITTEE.—*Third Report*—Office of the Clerk of the Parliaments and Office of the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod (No. 49).

PUBLIC BILLS.—*First Reading*—Smoke Nuisance Abatement (Metropolis)* (50).

Second Reading—Poisons (33).

POISONS BILL.—No. 33.

The Lord President.

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD CARLINGFORD (LORD PRESIDENT of the COUNCIL), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the subject was one of no little difficulty. It was much easier to realize the dangers that arose from the sale of poisons than to devise means for the protection of the public. The present Bill did not profess to provide any complete protection; nor could he say that any amendment of the law, whatever good it might do, would accomplish that object. There had been, however, for a long time past a widespread feeling in many quarters that fresh legislation was needed. Many demands had been made on the Government for such legislation, and the Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons had addressed them on the subject. Coroners and juries had called the attention of the Home Office to the question. The Home Office had called upon the Privy Council to provide a remedy; hence his appearance in charge of the present Bill. Many of the provisions of the Pharmacy Act, 1868, of the Arsenic Act, and of one or two other Acts, and

also of several Acts relating to Ireland, had been incorporated in the Bill. The Bill took the whole subject of poisons out of the Pharmacy Act, leaving that Act to deal solely with pharmacy properly so-called. It also transferred to the Privy Council certain powers and duties which that Act imposed on the Pharmaceutical Society in England. The Pharmaceutical Society was by that Act empowered to make regulations for the dispensing and sale of poisons by chemists and druggists. But the Society had not seen its way since 1868 to exercise that power. The Bill also imposed on the Privy Council the duty of adding, when necessary, to the list of poisons contained in the Schedules to the Bill, which formed the most important part of it. The power now exercisable by the Pharmaceutical Society, with the consent of the Privy Council, was by the Bill vested in the Privy Council itself. Some of the existing precautions were retained in the Bill, and others were enlarged. The Bill proposed five classes of precautions with respect to the sale of poisons. First, all poisons of every class were to be labelled "Poison," and with the name and address of the seller. Secondly, every seller of poisons of a certain class must be a qualified person —a chemist or druggist, or a qualified medical practitioner. This applied whenever the poison was sold, and whether it had a Government stamp on it or not. Thirdly, as to the purchaser of poisons, a new provision was introduced that poisons of a certain class would not be saleable to young persons under 17 years of age, or to persons unknown to the seller, unless introduced by some person known to him. Fourthly, as to the mode of selling poisons, a record would have to be kept of the sale of poisons of a certain class, and the name and address of the purchaser, and other particulars. And, fifthly, those who dispensed and sold poisons would be subject to regulations made by the Privy Council. All these five precautions would apply to the more virulent, and some only would apply to the less virulent poisons. There was also a special provision with respect to arsenic, which now came under the Arsenic Act. Then there was a clause dealing with substances which were not exactly poisons, but were of a more or less dangerous character. Such substances were to be labelled not necessarily with the word "Poison," but with words of caution, such as "To be used with caution." That was a useful provision, because the common and indiscriminate use of the word "Poison" might lead to danger. He then came to the Schedules, which were of the essence of the Bill. That which contained the list of poisons had been prepared with great care by the Medical Adviser of the Privy Council Office, who was Medical Officer to the Local Government Board, and who had had the assistance of a distinguished specialist in this subject. This Schedule was divided into three parts, with which the Bill proposed to deal in three different ways. One part contained the less virulent substances; and this part of the Bill was new, as they had never been dealt with by law at all. It related to certain substances of a dangerous character which were in common use in the arts and for domestic purposes—such, for instance, as carbolic acid, which were included under the scientific names in the Schedule. These the provisions of the Bill required to be labelled "Poison," and to have the name and address of the seller printed on the packet. Another class of poisons, of which laudanum might be taken as the type, was only to be saleable by a qualified chemist or druggist, or by a properly qualified medical practitioner; and in any case it was not to be saleable to any young person, or to some others. The sale of another class of poisons, of which prussic acid might be taken as the type, would, in addition to the conditions imposed on other classes of poisons, be subject to the restrictions that the buyer must be known to the seller, or be introduced by someone known to the seller, and that the whole transaction of the sale must be recorded in the manner prescribed in the Schedule. It was not proposed by the Bill to alter the law with regard to the sale of poisons by wholesale otherwise than to require the packets containing them to be labelled with the word "Poison." As to the so-called "patent medicines," which would be more properly termed "proprietary medicines," the restrictions would apply to them, whether sold under the Government stamp or not. The Government stamp conveyed to the mind of the public a meaning which was not accurate—that was to say, some-

Lord Carlingford

thing in the nature of a guarantee for the articles sold, but it implied nothing of the kind—it merely meant that a duty had been paid to the Government; and though it was unfortunate that £[illegible] a-year was derived from such a source, he must take the facts as he found them and deal with them as best he could. The Bill did not mention patent medicines, but put them on the same footing as all other medicines. It was supposed that some of those medicines contained a serious amount of poison in their ingredients—such as opium or laudanum; and the question would be whether the amount used was beneficial, harmless, or dangerous? The Bill left those who sold these medicines to take the risk of their being poisonous. In the event of such medicines proving poisonous, the seller would be subject to the penalties imposed by the Bill. It was clear that a vast majority of the compounds sold under the name of patent medicines could not be poison, otherwise the population of the country must have considerably diminished. No definition of the word "poisonous" had been laid down in the Bill. It was difficult to define the exact meaning of the word. Dr. Johnson had defined poison as "that which destroys or injures life by a small quantity, and by means not obvious to the senses." That was certainly rather a curious definition of the word, and could scarcely be introduced into an Act of Parliament. Should any patent medicines prove to be of a poisonous character they would be thereafter included in the Schedule of the Bill. This threw the responsibility, in the interest of the public, on the manufacturer and the seller of those compounds to take care that they did not [illegible] within the meaning of "poisons" under the Bill. He did not think that any Bill could provide [illegible] protection of the public against ignorance and stupidity; but he had great hopes that the Bill would effect a considerable improvement in the law, and give increased protection. He [illegible] the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2a."—(*The Lord President.*)

VISCOUNT BARRINGTON pointed out the absence of [illegible] with regard to the whole [illegible] of wall paper strongly impregnated with [illegible]

[illegible]

LORD [illegible] MALMESBURY [illegible]

[illegible]

LORD CARLINGFORD [illegible]

[illegible]

Moved, [illegible]

[illegible]

ARMY [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Under Secretary of State for War, [illegible]

[illegible]

point as to which the Board felt extremely anxious. There was no hospital ward where fever cases, or inflammation of lungs, or such serious diseases could be properly attended to. The medical officers strongly impressed the importance of such provision being made for the sick cadets. As to Woolwich, perhaps, the Report was not so satisfactory. The conduct, discipline, and *morale* were all excellent, but the Board were struck with the jaded and languid appearance of the cadets. It was felt that Woolwich was not, perhaps, so healthy a residence as Sandhurst, and that might account for the cadets not looking so well, though the official Medical Report was on the whole not unfavourable.

VISCOUNT BURY urged that the dietary should be improved, and that the present system of the parents of the cadets supplementing the dietary arrangements of the College should be rendered unnecessary by the provision of a generous diet, such as the growing lads were accustomed to at their homes. Where the body and mind were hard at work, and the young men were growing, it was essential that the dietary should be good.

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he was sure it would be satisfactory to the House to hear his noble Friend (Viscount Enfield) give so extremely favourable a report of Sandhurst, and also, with a small exception, as to Woolwich. He believed that what his noble Friend had told the House as to both these Establishments was perfectly true. With regard to the recommendations which were made in the Report of the Board of Visitors at Sandhurst, he might say that all the suggestions had either been attended to or were now being carried out. As to the one matter which required the greatest consideration—namely, the hospital wards, authority had been given to fit out such a ward as was referred to. He hoped that would be done after the Easter Vacation. The suggestions of the Board of Visitors with regard to Sandhurst were being carried out, and especially those with respect to hospital wards. The other recommendations respecting smaller matters would also receive attention. As regarded Woolwich, some complaints had been made by the Board of Visitors with respect to the dietary; a change had been made, and different hours for meals had also been adopted. No complaints had come to his notice with regard to the meals at Sandhurst. He trusted that the changes that had been made would be satisfactory.

VISCOUNT BURY asked whether his noble Friend would take his suggestions into consideration?

VISCOUNT ENFIELD, on the part of the Board of Visitors, promised that the noble Viscount's remarks should receive their attention. He might say that at Sandhurst they heard no complaints with respect to the diet; but at Woolwich there were complaints, more especially with regard to the hours, and in a certain degree as to the quality of the provisions. The medical officer thought it his duty to bring these complaints under the notice of the Board.

VISCOUNT BURY said, that complaint was made as to the quantity, not the quality, of the provisions—a more generous diet was required.

ARMY—THE AUXILIARY FORCES.

NOTICE.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS, who had a Notice on the Paper to call attention to the want of organization of the Auxiliary Forces, said, that he did not propose to bring the subject forward on that occasion; but, considering the matter of so much importance, he intended to put in a different form—that of a definite Resolution. He proposed after Easter to move—

"That the present state of the Auxiliary Forces, deficient as they are in the organization and equipment necessary to enable them to take and keep the field, demands the immediate and urgent attention of those who are responsible for their efficiency and the security of the country."

He would read a telegram which he had just received from a Member of their Lordships' House, than whom no one had done more for the Volunteer Force. The Duke of Westminster telegraphed—

"Press equipment and organization of Volunteers. Efforts of 26 years should be made of effect, otherwise absolutely useless, and give air of security terribly false, inviting, possibly, heavy disaster."

He was sure that everyone who was acquainted with the Volunteer Service would endorse the words of the noble Duke.

VISCOUNT BURY wished to express his pleasure at the fact that the noble Earl intended to bring this subject for-

ward in the form of a substantive Motion. His noble Friend would not stand alone in the matter, but would be backed up by the whole Volunteer Force and the whole Military Force of this country.

LAW AND POLICE—STREET NEWS-VENDORS.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord de ROS, in rising to ask, Whether any powers exist for the prevention of persons calling out in the public streets sensational matter which may or may not exist in the newspapers which they offer for sale? said, he had no wish to prevent the free and legitimate circulation of news, especially in these very anxious times, but he thought the way in which news was sometimes communicated ought to be put a stop to. At the present time men and boys were constantly going about the streets shouting out, "Another battle!" "Frightful slaughter!" and such like cries. Sometimes the news was true and sometimes it was not; but he thought some steps should be taken to check the nuisance occasioned. Many of the cries were utterly opposed to all the common dictates of humanity. Only a few weeks ago a report arrived of the death of a gallant General Officer who was killed in action. It was only through the considerate intervention of a private friend that this was not communicated to the unfortunate wife of the General through the shouts of the newsvendors in the streets. Without entering into the matter, he might mention the case of a certain Member of their Lordships' House who, on finding that a newsvendor was calling out something that did not appear in the papers, proceeded against the man in the Police Court and had him punished by the magistrate.

The Earl of DALHOUSIE said, he believed there was no Act of Parliament restricting or prohibiting street cries, for the purpose of selling newspapers, and the Home Secretary did not consider that any fresh legislation on the subject was advisable. If newspapers were sold purporting to contain news which they did not contain, that would constitute an indictable offence, and the person selling the papers could be prosecuted for obtaining money by false pretences. He was not, however, aware of the existence of any general provision for preventing news, whether true or false, from being cried in the streets.

Viscount BURY asked if the noble Earl was quite sure that no Acts of Parliament existed dealing with street cries?

The Earl of DALHOUSIE said, that his reply referred only to the announcement of news, whether true or false.

ARMY (RESERVE).

MOTION FOR A RETURN.

The Earl of DUCIE, in rising to move—

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for a Return of the number of First Class Army Reserve men in each regimental district who have been registered as desirous of civil employment in accordance with General Order 72, of June 1884,

said, that some organization was required for bringing these men into contact with employers of labour. It would be a proper supplement to the county regimental system. By means of such a Return as that for which he now moved they would be able to see whether the proportion of men who had placed themselves on the register bore any reasonable proportion to the number of Reserve men belonging to that depôt or centre. If the proportion was not a reasonable one, then they might assume that there was some definite reason for the failure of the scheme. In conclusion, he begged to move for the Return of which he had given Notice.

Address for—

"Return of the number of First Class Army Reserve men in each regimental district who have been registered as desirous of civil employment in accordance with General Order 72, of June 1884."—*The Earl of Ducie.*

The Earl of MORLEY said, that he had not the slightest objection to giving the Return asked for, and he was glad to take this opportunity of calling attention to facts of considerable importance to the Army and to the country at large. He could not at the present time give the number of men whose names had been entered on the register for civil employment. He was afraid, however, that the number at the end of last year had not been large; in fact, it had been considerably smaller than he had hoped would be the case in comparison with the number of men who had left the Colours. This scheme, however, was

entirely a new departure, the order laid down for establishing this register of employment having only been issued last June, and, as in all other professions, it was some time before a measure of this kind became known. He had no reason to suppose that there was any suspicion as to the register; but if it were so, experience would remove this. He proposed to give this Return as accurately as he could up to the end of the present month. He would point out how important it was with regard to an organization such as this that the officers commanding the depôt centres should be brought into contact with the employers of labour, great or small. It was impossible to do so without civil co-operation. It would be of enormous use to the Army, and would remove prejudices still lingering in the minds of some with regard to joining the Colours, if there were a tolerable certainty that a man with good character would, on return from the Colours, be nearly sure of obtaining civil employment.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he quite agreed with the noble Earl as to the advantage of some such organization. It was, however, a curious thing that the men themselves had failed to take advantage of the existing arrangement. One of the officers connected with headquarters had told him that in the central register there were extremely few names put down last year on the register as wanting employment. There seemed to be considerable exaggeration as to the number of Reserve men without employment, and he believed that it was the fact that a good Reserve man could always command employment. Of course, all Reserve men were not of equally good character, and the mere fact of being a Reserve man would not obtain a man employment. He thought that it was inadvisable that any exaggeration should be allowed to go abroad as to a number of Reserve men wandering about the country without employment.

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM observed, that in his county there had been only two or three Reserve men last year wishing for employment who had not obtained it.

THE EARL OF DUCIE said, he wished to express his satisfaction with regard to the tone of the discussion which had taken place.

Motion *agreed to*.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT.

RESOLUTION.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH, who had the following Notice on the Paper:—

"To resolve That considering the loss of life and treasure that has been incurred by this country in Egypt, any arrangements with the Powers, either political or financial, which may tend to impair or diminish the influence of England in the administration of that country, such as the acceptance of any form of loan to the Egyptian Treasury under a joint guarantee of the Powers, would be unacceptable to this House,"

said, that although they were expecting Papers on the subject, upon which there would be a full discussion in their Lordships' House, it still appeared to him that there were certain features connected with the financial arrangements in regard to Egypt upon which a few preliminary remarks might with advantage be made. The discussion had been too long deferred, and it seemed to him that all they had now to expect was not only a foregone conclusion but an arrangement of a disastrous nature. At the time when the Dual Control had been established, the peculiar circumstances which had arisen in Egypt had rendered it necessary to make some arrangement for the financial condition of Egypt. He thought he might say that, although the Dual Control had been fortuitous in its origin, in the opinion of many persons who understood the subject, it had been extremely successful in many of its objects. Egypt was not a country isolated like Turkey from European affairs, but one possessing every species of interest and trade of every description. By the abolition of that Dual Control they had alienated France and given a stimulus to Prince Bismarck to adopt a European policy which was likely to bring about considerable difficulties. The late M. Gambetta was a firm believer in an alliance between England and France on Egyptian affairs, and it was at his desire that the Joint Note was addressed to Egypt by those two Powers. That Note meant that England and France were trustees for the arrangement between the European Powers and the Khedive, and that M. Gambetta would put his foot down and maintain that arrangement. But M. Gambetta went out of Office and was suc-

ceeded by M. de Freycinet, who reversed the policy of his Predecessor. Things were then allowed to drift until the mutiny of the Egyptian Colonels broke out. Then a Conference was held; and, during the middle of its deliberations, to the astonishment of Europe as well as of the Liberal Party in England, Mr. Gladstone's Government decided to bombard Alexandria. He did not say that that bombardment was not forced upon them; but France refused to join with them in the enterprize which resulted in the battle of Tel-el-Kebir. The abolition of the Dual Control dated from the time when the Khedive, at the instigation of Her Majesty's Government, issued a Decree annulling that Control; and from that moment they alienated the sympathies of the French people, which had hitherto been with them in their operations in Egypt. The French people became fully alive to the mistake made by M. de Freycinet, which they felt practically threw Egypt into the hands of England. They might have been prepared for the abolition of the Dual Control, but they were not prepared to accept the way in which it was effected, still less to accept the doctrine of repudiation which was afterwards proclaimed. He would not dwell on the series of disasters which ended in the betrayal and death of our hero and Envoy. Her Majesty's Government had wasted their treasure and sacrificed the lives of their fellow-countrymen, and they were going to impose enormous burdens on the British taxpayers; and in return they had gained nothing but discredit abroad and the disapproval of the English people. The financial arrangements now contemplated would, he believed, be looked upon as the culmination of that history of disgrace. From the day that they made themselves the patron of the Khedive, both in the eyes of the Mussulman and the European world, they became responsible for the whole administration of Egypt. But it had been the object of Her Majesty's Ministers to hold out to the European Powers that the Khedive was acting on his own initiative, and was not necessarily inspired by the British Government. The policy which allowed matters in the Soudan to drift from the date of the disaster to Hicks Pasha's Army down to the death of General Gordon was the same as that which had allowed affairs in Egypt Proper to drift from the disregard of the claims of the sufferers in Alexandria down to the hopeless surrender of all the positions that they originally took up If the Government had really understood and recognized the responsibility they were undertaking when they sent Lord Dufferin on his mission to Egypt, they would have instructed him to advise the Khedive to issue some formal Decree or assurance that the foreign bondholders' claims would be met Their Lordships would remember that during the last two years the Radical Press and Radical orators had expatiated on the rapacity of the bondholders and the unfortunate condition of the fellaheen But the folly of the Government had been shown in lending a ready ear to the cry of that Party. They were ready to assent to the abolition of the Law of Liquidation. So long as the Dual Control lasted they had the sympathy of the French people, who were prepared to work with them so long as they considered them their co-trustees. Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to go to the logical result which the abolition of the Dual Control involved—they were not prepared to annex Egypt, nor to propose any scheme for remodelling the National Debt of Egypt under the guarantee of the British Government at a reduced rate of interest, thereby relieving the Revenue from the difficulty in which it was placed Her Majesty's Government said they would not undertake the responsibility of managing the finances of Egypt, but they would try by diplomatic means to induce the Powers to consent to some modified scheme of liquidation. With that view they proposed a Conference; and their Lordships knew what took place during that Conference. Their Lordships were debarred from discussing the question, on the ground that it would be extremely inopportune and inconvenient for them to do so pending its deliberations, and, owing to the late period of the Session, no opportunity afterwards presented itself for raising such a discussion. The Conference came to an untimely end, and nothing could be more instructive than to read the paragraphs of the Protocol indicating what passed between the noble Earl the Foreign Secretary and M. Waddington If the Government had accepted the method suggested by the First Lord of

the Admiralty, they would have been in a better position than that which they now occupied. The character of Lord Northbrook's Report was well known. The Government had stated that Egypt was not able to pay its debts. The Powers thought she could. But it was said that Lord Northbrook advised no reduction of the claims of the bondholders. That view was displeasing to the Government.

EARL GRANVILLE: May I ask the noble Duke whence he has derived all this intimate knowledge of these affairs?

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH said, that if the noble Earl had read the public papers, especially *The Times*, he would see that what he had said was substantially accurate. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had yesterday stated that it was proposed that the loan should be subject to an International Guarantee. The right hon. Gentleman said that we had not asked for such a Guarantee, and that no right of interference with our administration was granted thereby to the Powers. He could not understand what the Guarantee meant, unless it meant that we had, immediately after Tel-el-Kebir, taken up a strong position and undertaken to deal with not only the military, but also the political and financial position. But ever since that period we had practically done nothing at all. We had abandoned one position after another. What was the sacrifice asked in the new proposals from the bondholders? It was only 5 per cent reduction for two years, and that was to be paid back if there was a surplus. But that concession only amounted to £200,000 a-year. Was it worth while to make an alteration in the Law of Liquidation for so small an advantage? Then there was to be a suspension of the Sinking Fund. But by good administration, by taxing the notables, and other means, sufficient might be raised to make up that advantage. Notwithstanding all the sacrifices we had made, we should get nothing out of them, and had in the meantime covered ourselves with indelible disgrace. What would be the feeling of our Administrators in Egypt when they saw themselves placed in a subsidiary position to other Powers; what would be the feeling of the English people when they saw their Army of Occupation doing the work of bum-bailiffs—when we were obliged to use the kourbash on people whom the Prime Minister had stated to be overtaxed; what would be the feeling of our soldiers who would have to fight a campaign next autumn, of the British taxpayer, of those who had lost their relatives in that unhappy war, when England woke up and realized that the Government had abandoned every advantage, receded from every position, and landed the country in disgrace, as regarded not only the past but the future also?

Moved to resolve "That considering the loss of life and treasure that has been incurred by this country in Egypt, any arrangements with the Powers, either political or financial, which may tend to impair or diminish the influence of England in the administration of that country, such as the acceptance of any form of loan to the Egyptian Treasury under a joint guarantee of the Powers, would be unacceptable to this House."—(*The Duke of Marlborough.*)

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I own that when I came down to this House I did not expect the noble Duke to go on with his Motion. The Motion implies a Vote of Censure, to a certain degree of a hypothetical character. I hope the noble Duke will not think it want of courtesy, or want of appreciation of the ability with which he has stated his own views, that I do not think it desirable that I should give an answer to the noble Duke. At our last meeting the noble Marquess asked how far we had arrived at an agreement with the other Powers on this question. I stated that a preliminary Declaration had been signed on that day, and that we expected to sign the Articles of Convention yesterday. The noble Marquess very properly requested an early distribution of Papers. I met that with the assurance that they should be distributed as soon as possible. I laid some Papers on the Table to-day. I believe other Papers will be presented almost immediately. The Declaration and Convention will be distributed to your Lordships to-morrow, and other Papers at the end of this week or certainly at the beginning of the next. In these circumstances, I think it is most unusual to proceed with a Vote of Censure on the Government. I do not say it is unfair to myself and my Colleagues, who would have rather an advantage, as we should argue having a knowledge of these Papers, of which your Lordships are perfectly ignorant. I think it

unfair to the noble Duke himself, who has made a Motion entirely directed against an International Guarantee of the loan, the proposition contained in which I think I shall be able entirely to controvert. The noble Duke's speech has ranged all over the Egyptian history — what Mr. Gladstone said about the Dual Control, the bombardment of Alexandria, and all the subjects which have been so often discussed. He has said hardly one sentence in regard to the Vote of Censure which he has presented, I rather think, on his own authority. Therefore, I must beg to be excused from discussing his Motion at this moment; but I wish your Lordships to understand that we are most ready to meet the discussion which the noble Marquess has promised shall come on at an early day.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs having announced that the Papers with reference to Egypt will be distributed at an early date, it is undoubtedly more in accordance with our practice and obviously more convenient that we should not now go fully into the circumstances to which those Papers refer. I, however, understood the noble Duke in the course of his speech to say he did not consider that this was to be a conclusive discussion of the matter, but that he rather wished to dispose of the preliminary chapter of this long and complicated history, with the view of dealing with the precise matter of his Motion on a future occasion. I do not know the views of the noble Duke, but I should not recommend him to press his Motion on the present occasion. It is obviously almost impossible for us to deal with the character of the engagements entered into by the noble Earl till the precise words of them are before us. I do not agree with the noble Earl that the noble Duke has repeated all the charges made against Her Majesty's Government, because in many respects I thought the noble Duke showed greater knowledge of the subject than has been shown before by others, and that he opened up in some respects new fields of discussion, especially in regard to the question how far the attitude of this country towards France has been affected by the policy which Her Majesty's Government have pursued since the Egyptian Question arose. This is a very interesting question, and I believe that although there are very obvious grounds for reticence it has never been dealt with so thoroughly as other parts of the Egyptian Question. But I quite agree with the noble Earl that this and all other matters had better be deferred to a period when we shall have the Papers in our hands and are able to express an opinion upon them. I heard with some dismay—if I may make use of so irregular an observation—that this matter is to be discussed in the other House of Parliament almost immediately. I could have hoped that we should have some time to consider the matter before dealing with it; and I think there is an additional ground for claiming such indulgence on the part of the Government, as it has not been owing to any *laches* of ours that a discussion did not take place at an earlier period, but rather it was owing to one of the most remarkable scenes in Parliamentary history; and I would invoke the presiding genius of Mr. Goschen to act again on the feelings of Her Majesty's Government and to urge them not to press forward this important and difficult question for discussion at too early a period, as this is one of the most momentous questions which has occupied the attention of Parliament for many years.

THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH, having asked the noble Earl whether he would place on the Table full details of the Report made by the First Lord of the Admiralty, intimated his willingness to withdraw the Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

SMOKE NUISANCE ABATEMENT (METROPOLIS) BILL. [H.L.]

A Bill to amend the Acts for abating the nuisance arising from the smoke of furnaces and fireplaces within the Metropolis — Was *presented* by The Lord STRATHEDEN and CAMPBELL, read 1ª (No. 50.)

House adjourned at a quarter past six o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 19*th March*, 1885.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — Miscellaneous and other Services, *appointed.*
SUPPLY — *considered in Committee* — ARMY ESTIMATES (NUMBERS).
Resolutions [March 16] *reported.*
WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—£2,130,084 5*s.* 7*d.*, Consolidated Fund; £10,804,750, Consolidated Fund.
PUBLIC BILLS—*Resolution in Committee*—East India (Loan).
Resolutions [March 18] *reported—Ordered—First Reading*—Cape of Good Hope (Advance) * [101].
Ordered—First Reading — Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order * [100]; Church Boards * [102].

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—QUESTIONS — ORDER—THE NEWSPAPER PRESS—OFFENSIVE CARTOONS.

MR. BERESFORD: I beg to give Notice that on to-morrow I shall ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether the attention of the Government has been called to a most scandalous cartoon representing the death of Earl Spencer issued with the last edition of *United Ireland;* whether he does not consider cartoons such as that a direct incentive to outrage; and, also, whether the proprietors of that journal are not Members of the House of Commons; and, if steps will not be taken to prevent outrageous and cowardly attacks of this kind upon Her Majesty's Representatives in Ireland?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I beg to give Notice, that when the hon. Member puts his Question, I will ask whether the cartoon does not represent the political death of Earl Spencer?

MR. SEXTON: On a point of Order, Mr. Speaker, I would ask you whether the Notice given by the hon. Member for Armagh can appear upon the Notice Paper in that form; and, whether it does not doubly violate the Rules by applying the terms "outrageous and cowardly" to Members of this House; and, also, whether it is not out of Order in expressing an opinion?

MR. SPEAKER: The Notice given by the hon. Member will be revised and put into a proper shape before it appears on the Paper.

MR. BERESFORD: Shall I be in Order, Sir, in submitting the cartoon at the same time as my Question, especially for your consideration?

MINES, &c.—THE DOROTHEA SLATE QUARRY (NANTLLE).

MR. JONES-PARRY asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Inspector of Mines for North Wales has reported as to the causes producing, or to which may be referrable, the recent floodings and loss of life at the Dorothea slate quarry, Nantlle, and the Llanengan mine, and as to the condition of those quarries and workings, and whether he will supply a Copy of that Report; and, whether he will appoint for North Wales an inspector of mines, or a sub-inspector to the inspector of mines, eminently competent to inspect and direct the working of quarries as distinct from mines, and with special regard to the safety and protection of the workmen?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT was understood to say that the matter referred to in the Question had been often considered, and it was not thought expedient to place the mines under Home Office inspection.

MR. JONES-PARRY gave Notice that he would bring the matter before the attention of the House.

INDIA—THE BENGAL SETTLEMENT, 1793.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If he will cause to be presented to the House as brief a memorandum as the subject will allow, showing the main heads of the arrangements connected with the permanent settlement of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa, entered into in 1793, so as to bring out the nature and extent of the promises made by Government to protect the rights of cultivators, and how far these promises have since 1793 been fulfilled or left unfulfilled; also the money settlements between the Zemindars and the Government, as to the ratio of the sums collected from the cultivators to be paid to the Government, and the amount and the ratio to be retained by the Zemindar, with estimates of the then total revenue likely to be

realised, and contrasting these estimates with those of modern times so as to show the differences; further, information to be supplied, regarding all public works obligatory to be executed by the *Zemindars*, and how far these obligations have been fulfilled and works of a character beneficial to the cultivator have been carried out or neglected; the land rates levied from cultivators at the time of the settlement, as far as these can be ascertained, to be contrasted with the existing rates and with the land rates levied in other parts of India; and, generally, any other information which will make the permanent settlement as clear as it can be made, such as the areas of land cultivated formerly and at present, and uncultivated; the areas of Madras and North West Provinces with their land revenues to be shown in contrast with the area and land revenue under the permanent settlement?

Mr. J. K. CROSS: After considering very fully the possibility of presenting to the House such a Memorandum as that indicated by my hon. and gallant Friend, it seems that, however interesting and instructive such a document might be, it would necessarily be of so controversial a nature as to be valueless, except as being the expression of the opinion of the person who had compiled it. In connection with the Bengal Tenancy Act, the India Office has received about 5,000 pages of printed matter, a selection from which will be presented. These Papers will, I hope, place hon. Members in possession of much of the information asked for by the hon. and gallant Member for Kincardine.

FISHERY BOARD (SCOTLAND)—SURPLUS FROM HERRING BRANDING.

Sir ALEXANDER GORDON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether there is any prospect of the Government placing at the disposal of the Scotch Fishery Board this year the £31,000 surplus brand fees, which the Treasury have received from Scotch herring curers since 1860, in excess of the actual expense incurred by Government for imposing the brand?

Mr. HIBBERT: In reply to my hon. and gallant Friend, I can only say that I have no power to place at the disposal of the Scotch Fishery Board any moneys other than those appropriated for the service of that Board by Parliament. I have altogether failed to verify the figure of £31,000 which he has given; but, whether the real amount of the surplus in 25 years be more or less, this will not affect my answer.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE NATIONAL GALLERY—PURCHASE OF PICTURES.

Mr. CARTWRIGHT asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If it is true that, consequent on the recent purchase of pictures from the Blenheim Collection, the customary annual grant to the National Gallery is to remain suspended for a term of years; and, if so, whether the Trustees of the National Gallery have addressed any representation on the subject to the Treasury; and, in the event of any such Correspondence having passed, whether there would be any objection to laying the same upon the Table of the House?

Mr. HIBBERT: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that, as in the case of the purchase of the Peel Collection, we have come to the conclusion that we should not be justified in including any sum for the purchase of pictures in the Estimate for the National Gallery for some time to come, in consequence of the magnitude of the grant recently sanctioned by this House for the purchase of pictures from the Blenheim Collection. But in making this decision known to the Trustees of the National Gallery, we added that, if any exceptionally advantageous opportunity should arise of acquiring works of a representative character, and of a school or period of which examples are wanted in the Gallery, we should be prepared to give immediate consideration to any proposal which they might submit to us. The Trustees have been in communication with my right hon. Friend on the subject, and he has told them that the time has not yet arrived for any reconsideration of this decision; but if they wish to discuss the question when the Estimate for next year is about to be settled, he will be happy to confer with them. At present, we see no reason for publishing this Correspondence. So far as finance is concerned, the Trustees are in the position of a department subordinate to the Treasury

LORD JOHN MANNERS wished to know what was intended by the expression, "for some time to come?"

MR. HIBBERT said, he supposed that it meant until the amount was run off—the amount usually allowed to the National Gallery for the purchase of pictures.

LORD JOHN MANNERS asked whether he was to understand that some eight years were to elapse before Parliament would be requested to vote another contribution to the National Gallery?

MR. HIBBERT said, the noble Lord would see by the answer he had given that the matter had been very much qualified.

EGYPT—HIRED TRANSPORTS—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is the fact that the Transport Department have lately chartered vessels for the conveyance of navvies and other passengers to be employed on the projected railway from Suakin to Berber, and that such vessels are not certificated as passenger ships by the Board of Trade; and, if so, why the Law with regard to ships carrying passengers has not been complied with in this case; and, whether he will place upon the Table of the House a copy of the rules which shipowners are supposed to comply with before their vessels can be placed upon the Admiralty list for the purposes of transport?

MR. CAINE: The Transport Department have lately chartered five transports, in which navvies and other passengers have been, or are about to be, conveyed. Two of them are passenger ships under the Passenger Act, 18 and 19 *Vict.* c. 119, the others are not passenger ships under the meaning of that Act, which exempts from its operations "ships in the service of the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral." All these ships, whether passenger ships or not, have been duly surveyed and passed by the Surveying and Engineer officers employed by the Transport Department. There is no Admiralty list for the purposes of transport. The only Admiralty list is that prepared by the Controller of the Navy for other purposes.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—THE WIVES OF MARINES SERVING IN THE SOUDAN.

SIR JOHN HAY (for Lord HENRY LENNOX) asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Why the wives of those serving in the Naval Brigade, including Marine Artillery and Marines, now incorporated in General Graham's Army in the Soudan, are not entitled to the increase of 8*d.* per diem which has been sanctioned in the case of the wives of soldiers serving there; and, whether he will do his best to redress this grievance?

MR. CAINE: The allowance of 8*d.* a-day, known as separation allowance, which is granted to the wives of soldiers, is not payable to seamen's wives, the conditions of service being different; neither is this allowance payable to the wives of Marines when serving under Naval regulations, but both seamen and Marines receive field allowance of 6*d.* a-day, which is not granted in the Army. The Marines serving in Egypt might be placed under Army regulations; but, on the whole, the Naval regulations are the more favourable to them.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—DISORDERLY LANGUAGE—CASE OF GEORGE BARKER, CLIFFONEY, CO. SLIGO.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, With regard to the case against George Barker, to be heard to-morrow at Cliffoney (county Sligo) Petty Sessions, whether the Government are aware that Barker is gamekeeper to a local landlord, and that he is in the habit of shooting and fishing in company with the local stipendiary magistrate; and, whether, with a view to an impartial trial, a stipendiary magistrate from another district will be sent to hear the case, and the local landlords in the Commission of the Peace will be requested not to adjudicate upon it?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I understand that Mr. Maloney, the Resident Magistrate, occasionally shoots with the gentleman in whose employment Barker is; but he informs me that he has never shot or fished with Barker alone. Mr. Maloney's duties require his presence at another Petty Sessions to-morrow, and Mr. Turner, R.M., will take his place at Grange Petty Sessions.

The Government have no power to order the local magistrates not to attend.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—KILDARE AND CLARE COUNTIES.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Who were the gentlemen lately recommended by the Athy (Kildare) and Killadysert (Clare) Boards of Guardians for appointment to the Commission of the Peace; whether the Lieutenant of either county supported, in any case, the recommendation of the guardians; and, if not, whether either the Lieutenant of Kildare or the Lieutenant of Clare communicated to the Lord Chancellor or to the Board of Guardians any reason for the refusal; whether the Lord Chancellor appointed any of the gentlemen recommended by the Boards in question; and, whether the intimation in his secretary's letter of the 10th instant, to the Killadysert Board, that, "in the absence of any recommendation from the Lord Lieutenant of the county," he rejected the application of the guardians, is to be regarded as conveying that the repeated declarations by the Government of the determination to appoint suitable persons, in the absence of recommendations from Lieutenants of counties, has no effective force?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I must decline to state the names of persons who have not been appointed to the Commission of the Peace. It is true that the Lord Chancellor, acting not only on the opinion of the Lieutenants of the two counties but on his own judgment, has not seen his way to appoint the gentlemen recommended by these two Boards, but he has no intention of departing from the declarations which have been made on this subject.

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)—MR. WILLIAM IVORY, SHERIFF OF INVERNESS-SHIRE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Lord Advocate, If his attention has been called to a letter of the Rev. Donald M'Cullum, of Waternish, in *The Oban Times* of the 7th ult., charging Mr. W. Ivory, Sheriff of Inverness, Elgin, and Nairn, with having, on the 29th of January last, at Glendale, in the presence of a crowd of people, used unbecoming language of a threatening and provocative character; and, whether the Government have made any inquiry to ascertain if Sheriff Ivory acted as described?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour), in reply, said, he had answered a Question almost identical with this some time ago, and he explained at that time that the Government had had a Report from the Sheriff in regard to this matter.

Mr. SEXTON asked whether five men had not made statutory declarations before Mr. M'Leod, a Justice of the Peace, charging this Sheriff with having publicly used threatening and blasphemous language; and, if so, would that alter the right hon. and learned Gentleman's views on the matter?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) replied, that he was not aware that that was so. He had had no intimation.

Mr. SEXTON said, he had the declarations, and would show them to the right hon. and learned Gentleman.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, he asked the previous Question to which the Lord Advocate referred. Had any inquiry been made as to the truth of the allegations?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour) replied, that they had the statement of the letter in the newspapers on the one hand, and on the other the statement in the Sheriff's Report.

PUBLIC HEALTH—THE CONDITION OF THE UPPER THAMES.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether any action is contemplated, in view of the deputation from the Local Board of Twickenham, which recently waited upon him to call attention to the condition of the Thames between Richmond and Isleworth?

Mr. H. H. FOWLER, in reply, said, there was some conflict as to who was the responsible Authority in this matter; whether it was the Metropolitan Board of Works, which deposited the sewage, or the Thames Conservancy, who ought to have taken the mud resulting from the sewage away; and there was also some doubt as to what were the powers of the Secretary of State as to one or both of these Bodies. The matter was receiving the careful attention of the Home Office, which was doing all it could to remedy what he must call the

very disgraceful state of the Thames at that point.

INLAND REVENUE OFFICERS—RETIREMENTS.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is true that numbers of collectors, supervisors, and officers of Inland Revenue, in various parts of the United Kingdom, have been called upon to retire on attaining forty years' service, or thereabouts; whether some of the chief officials at Somerset House who have to deal with such compulsory retirements are older men, with from forty-one to forty-seven years' service; and, whether steps will be taken to apply the same rule of compulsory retirement to all officials?

Mr. HIBBERT: The Board of Inland Revenue, having regard to the age and efficiency of the officers under their control, have, under certain conditions, called on some of those who have reached the age of 65 years with over 40 years' service to retire. None of the chief officials at Somerset House fall within similar conditions.

POST OFFICE—MONEY ORDER OFFICE—PROMOTION.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the long-continued stagnation of promotion in the Money Order Officer; whether that is mainly caused by the transfer of a good deal of the "Money Order" business to the "Postal Order" Department, dealt with by a newly-created staff; whether since April 1873, that is, for nearly twelve years, there have been only two promotions from second to first class clerkships; and, whether, if this is so, as the clerks claim to be servants of the General Post Office and Civil Service generally, and not of a department, he will see that steps are now taken to secure to the officers of the Money Order Office the maintenance of the prospects with which they entered the service by giving them, if necessary, an adequate share of promotion outside their own department?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: It is true that but few vacancies have occurred in the upper ranks of the Money Order Office in recent years, and, consequently, the promotion has not been rapid. The number of clerkships in the upper ranks has not been reduced since the introduction of the postal-order system, and, therefore, the stagnation of promotion is in no way due to that measure. I have endeavoured to meet the case to some extent by granting appointments to other branches of the Post Office Service; but I will not pledge myself to follow that course in future, although I may, perhaps, do so.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—SALARIES OF ATTENDANTS.

Mr. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Executive has taken into consideration the claims of the attendants in the Irish Lunatic Asylums to be placed in a better position with regard to salary and superannuation, so as to be nearer to an equality in these respects with the attendants in the English Asylums; whether the Boards of Governors of several of the Irish Asylums have recently passed resolutions strongly recommending the case of the attendants to the attention of the Executive; and, what course he is prepared to take.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The hon. Member put a very similar Question to my right hon. Predecessor in May last year. I can only repeat that the attendants in the district lunatic asylums in Ireland are the servants of the respective Boards of Governors, and that any recommendations which any of the Boards make in favour of increase of salary to members of their staff have always received and will continue to receive the most careful consideration of the Government. As regards pensions, they are given by the Boards of Governors, with the concurrence of the Inspectors, on the principles of the Superannuation Act of 1859, which, I understand, receive a very liberal constructions in their application to the cases of officers and servants in lunatic asylums?

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—NON-RESIDENT ELECTORS.

Mr. P. J. POWER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at elections of Poor Law Guardians in Ireland, directions

by non-resident electors to have voting papers left for them in certain houses must be signed by the voters themselves, or how otherwise; and, whether voters resident in the division can direct voting papers for themselves to be left at houses other than those in which the voters reside, or than those for which they are rated?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The usual and most accurate way for a non-resident voter to signify his wishes is to do so in writing; but if the direction is conveyed to the Returning Officer in any other way, he might act on it if satisfied that the communication correctly described the voter's wishes and instructions. The papers for resident voters can only be left at their residences.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF GUARDIANS—LEGAL ADVICE.

MR. JUSTIN HUNTLY M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, taking into consideration that in most cases the persons nominated for the office of Poor Law Guardian in Ireland and their nominators are utterly ignorant of matters of Law, he, as President of the Local Government Board in Ireland, will take care that they shall not, at the scrutiny of votes, be deprived of the presence and advice of their legal advisers, in order to support their rights; and, whether, as it is impossible to sufficiently inspect at the scrutiny the statements of claims lodged by owners, which are very long and contain complicated details, he will direct the returning officers to give, before the scrutiny, reasonable facilities to candidates and their legal advisers to ascertain the correctness of these statements of claim?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I have nothing to add to the answers I have already given to similar Questions recently.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON TRAWLING—REPORT—LEGISLATION

MR. J. W. BARCLAY asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Government intends to bring in a Bill, this Session, to give effect to the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Trawling?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Yes, it is intended to introduce such a Bill.

REGISTRATION ACTS CONSOLIDATION LEGISLATION

MR. E. STANHOPE asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he will consider the possibility of preparing a Registration Bill consolidating existing legislation on the subject, into which the provisions of the new Registration (Occupation Voters) Bill could be incorporated immediately after it has passed through Parliament, in order that, at the approaching registration, the very numerous officials who will, for the first time, have to put in force provisions of a complicated character, may have the law upon the subject before them in a compact and intelligible form?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the Government had already considered the best means, with respect to this very difficult question, of dealing with registration, and they had come to the conclusion that it would be scarcely worth while or practically expedient to consolidate all the Acts under the circumstances mentioned in the Question.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked whether the hon. and learned Gentleman would see that some abstracts of the Acts were made, such as had been done in a somewhat similar case by the President of the Local Government Board?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the precepts they were bound to issue would very much assist the action of the overseers.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS observed, that if the hon. and learned Gentleman would take counsel with the President of the Local Government Board, he would find what very useful directions might be issued.

ARMY—THE ROYAL MILITARY COLLEGE, WOOLWICH—GENTLEMEN CADETS—MEAL TIMES.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has made further inquiry, and has satisfied himself that there is an interval of 6 hours and 20 minutes, from 7.55 a.m. to 2.15 p.m., between the breakfast and luncheon of the gentleman cadets at Woolwich; and, whether he will either cause that interval to be shortened, or direct that a small intermediate

meal be furnished to the cadets, with time for partaking of it?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: As I stated the other day, I have been making inquiries, and when I receive the replies no time will be lost in coming to a decision.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—VOLUNTEER REGIMENTS.

MR. COLERIDGE KENNARD asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is a fact that numerous regiments of Volunteers have applied for leave to increase their strength; and, if so, whether he will state the number of applications received, and the grounds upon which their proposals were declined?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Thirty-four Volunteer corps have applied for an increased establishment. Of these applications, 16 were granted and 18 refused, some on military and some on financial grounds. Each case was considered on its merits.

THE ASSAY OFFICE, EXETER.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether it is not the fact that the Assay Office at Exeter, for the purpose of marking manufactured plate, has not been long shut up, to the great inconvenience of silver and goldsmiths in the West of England; and, whether he will take steps to obviate the inconvenience and loss which ensues from the present state of things?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. CHILDERS): In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that the Assay Office at Exeter was discontinued in July, 1883, in consequence of the small amount of plate which was sent there to be assayed and marked. Nearly the whole of the plate assayed at that office in 1882 and up to July, 1883, was sent in by a Bristol firm, and when they transferred their business to London the necessity for continuing the office at Exeter ceased to exist. The Company, therefore, passed a resolution to close the office, as they considered that the expenses of keeping it up would not be covered by the fees. I find it hard to believe that the business of goldsmiths and silversmiths in the West of England should have so considerably increased since the Exeter office was closed as to give cause for the complaint of loss and inconvenience to the trade.

LICENSING ACT (1872)—THE MAGISTRATES.

MR. JACKSON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a recent case before the Leeds Borough Justices, in which a licensed publican was fined; whether two justices had to retire from the Bench owing to their disqualification under the sixtieth section of the Licensing Act, 1872, leaving the case to be tried by two well-known temperance advocates; and, whether he is prepared to recommend an amendment of that section of the Licensing Act, so that a justice shall not be disqualified by reason of his being a shareholder in a Railway Company which may have a hotel or refreshment room within the district for which he sits as a magistrate?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have seen the account of the case to which the hon. Member refers. It seems to me to be a case in which a man was proceeded against for allowing gaming in a public-house. Two of the Justices, who are described in the papers as connected with the wholesale liquor trade, retired from the Bench, and very properly so, during the hearing. The case, I understand, is under appeal, and I see no ground for interfering.

In reply to a further Question,

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said: I know nothing of the case except from the papers which the hon. Member himself sent me, in which the case is described. The paper the hon. Member sent me says—

"Before the hearing of the case, Messrs. Ewing and Walker were requested to retire from the Bench, it being considered that because they are, or had been, in some remote way or other connected with the wholesale liquor trade, they were not in a position to exercise an impartial judgment."

That is all I know.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACT—MR. POSNETT, OFFICIAL ARBITRATOR.

MR. O'SULLIVAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr.

Posnett, the arbitrator appointed by the Local Government Board in Ireland to value plots of land taken under the Labourers (Ireland) Act, has received his fee and expenses from the Guardians of the Kilmallock Union over a month since, to arbitrate in that Union, and that he has not yet taken any steps in the matter; whether this same arbitrator held an inquiry in the Limerick Union over a month since, on which occasion he promised to furnish the Guardians with the report of his arbitration in ten days, but which report has not yet reached the Guardians; and, whether he will take any steps to insist on the arbitrators doing their part of the work at once, so that the labourers throughout the country may get the plots in time to sow a crop in the land this spring?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: As Arbitrators under the Labourers Act are appointed by the Board of Works, this Question would have been more properly addressed to my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Treasury. I understand, however, that the 1st of May has been fixed by the Arbitrator and the Clerk of the Union for holding the Kilmallock inquiry. The Arbitrator has not received, and cannot receive, any fees until his final award is sent in. As regards Limerick, I am informed that the Arbitrator's award has been furnished, and that in every case where the Guardians wished it he has granted certificates to take up the sites. The Act of Parliament requires notice to be given of inquiries; but Mr. Posnett states that in no instance has there been any unnecessary delay on his part.

Mr. O'SULLIVAN asked, was the right hon. Gentleman aware that the Kilmallock Guardians had paid £50 expenses some time ago, but that the inquiry had not yet been held?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I regret the delay; but I am informed on Mr. Posnett's part that he has not yet received the money.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether any means can be employed to expedite the passage of the Labourers Bill? He knows as well as I do that it is greatly desired by the people. He could suggest action on this question by which the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) might stop Supply in order to allow the Bill to be passed for one or two nights.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not think I could act on the suggestion for some weeks. Just now there is little or no chance of doing anything of that sort.

POLICE EXPENSES (IRELAND)—INCIDENCE OF COST.

Mr. SMALL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a large number of police was on Sunday the 1st March brought from various parts of the county of Down to Newcastle and Ballynahinch, under the command of several resident magistrates, and kept there under arms a considerable time; whether he can state what number of men, resident magistrates, &c. were engaged in this expedition, the purpose for which they were brought, and at whose instigation; whether the entire district was not very quiet on the Sunday in question; and, whether it is intended to levy the expenses of the expedition off a district in which there was no necessity for it, or in what other manner?

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The police were assembled on the requisition of local magistrates in view of an apprehended disturbance. They were all of the county force, and any extra expense involved will therefore fall on the Constabulary Vote.

ARMY—THE STAFF COLLEGE.

Colonel MILNE-HOME asked the Secretary of State for War, What opportunities, if any, exist at the Staff College for officers to be instructed in modern Oriental languages, and if it is proposed to modify existing arrangements so as to increase facilities in that direction?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: No opportunities exist at the Staff College for officers to be instructed in modern Oriental languages. The time of officers while at the Staff College should be devoted exclusively to military studies. It is not, therefore, proposed to modify existing arrangements in this respect. The general question whether some encouragement should be given to officers to study Oriental and other modern languages is under consideration.

LUNACY LEGISLATION.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When the promised Lunacy Bill will be introduced in the House of Lords?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, there were a good many details to be settled in connection with the Lunacy Bill; but he hoped the measure would soon be introduced by the Lord Chancellor in the House of Lords.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (REDISTRIBUTION) BILL—REPRESENTATION OF MINORITIES.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR asked the President of the Local Government Board, If the Seats Bill contains adequate provision for the representation of the two million of the Irish minority in England; if not, whether he will consent to such modification of the boundaries in the centres containing a large Irish population as will give this adequate representation?

MR. BRODRICK: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers this Question I will ask whether such a Bill would contain adequate provision for the representation of the 1,500,000 Protestants in Ireland, and, if not, whether the right hon. Gentleman would consent to such a rectification of boundaries as would secure such provision?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I can hardly reply to the last Question except by saying that I cannot enter into argumentative matter. With regard to the Question which has been put upon the Paper, I have to say that the provisions for the indirect representation of minorities by means of the single-Member district system are the same in the three principal parts of the United Kingdom.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR afterwards asked whether, under the Bill, as it at present stood, there was any prospect of the Irish minority in England and Scotland being represented by 28 out of the 570 Members which would be the same proportion for them as the Loyal minority in Ireland?

MR. GIBSON: I would like to know whether there is any prospect of the Loyal minority in Ireland being represented by 33, which would be their proper number?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Twenty-three.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: These Questions raise matters of argument. It would be impossible for me to say how the Loyal minority in Ireland or the Irish minority in England and Scotland will be represented; but I believe that those best acquainted with the local circumstances of various towns in England say that some representation will be secured by the Irish minority, but I cannot say what.

AFRICA (SOUTH)—EXPEDITION TO BECHUANALAND—METHUEN'S HORSE.

MR. BRODRICK asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to a statement in *The Morning Post* of March 17th, as to the treatment of Methuen's Horse; whether it is the fact that the trooper's pay only accrued from date of landing in South Africa and not from that of embarkation; what explanation he can give of the alleged shortness of rations; and, whether he will undertake that British troops on active service shall not be put in the position of having to buy food out of their own pockets to supplement insufficient Government supplies?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have seen the paragraph in question. As regards pay, I would draw attention to a reply I made on the 20th November to the hon. Member for the Kirkcaldy Burghs (Sir George Campbell), to the effect that the Irregular Force for service in Bechuanaland would be raised in South Africa, and that the journeys thither of young men desirous of there enlisting would be facilitated. Of course, pay would only commence from the date of enlistment. The ration authorized for Bechuanaland is a very ample one, and no complaint has been received of any failure in issuing it.

In reply to further Questions,

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he was not aware that the men were drilled while on board ship. He would cause inquiries to be made as to the alleged deficiency of rations.

MUNICIPAL INCORPORATION OF TUNBRIDGE WELLS.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can lay upon the Table of the House the Report of

the Commission with reference to the proposed incorporation of the Town of Tunbridge Wells?

MR. MUNDELLA: I have to state in reply to the right hon. Gentleman that the Report of the Commission is made for the information of the Lords of the Council, and is always treated as a confidential document.

LAW AND POLICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—WANDERING LUNATICS.

MR. J. G. TALBOT asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a report of a case at the Westminster Police Court in *The Times* of March 17th, according to which an alleged lunatic was refused admission to the Workhouse—

"A course which was adopted, it was stated, in consequence of a recent legal decision."

whether it is correct, according to the same report, that Mr. Partridge said—

"It would be very inconvenient to send lunacy cases to the House of Detention, even if it were legal to do so, which he very much doubted."

Whereupon Inspector Chisholm said—

"It was even more inconvenient and apparently less justifiable to detain lunatics in the cells at Police Stations."

And that Mr. Partridge remarked—

"That it was to be hoped there would be fresh legislation on the subject before long. There must be an altered state of things."

whether eventually Mr. Partridge said he had not alternative but to send the man to the House of Detention, and said—

"Magistrates at present did not know what course to pursue."

and, whether Her Majesty's Government propose to take immediate steps to prevent alleged lunatics being confined in prisons?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I entirely agree with the purport of the remarks of the hon. Member, and I think that Mr. Partridge came ultimately to a proper conclusion in sending a wandering lunatic to the infirmary of the workhouse, and not to a police cell. My view is unquestionably that the proper treatment for a wandering lunatic is to send him to the workhouse, and not to the prison. To send a lunatic to the police cell or the prison is very likely to increase his malady and to lead to his death. I may state that this has been the view for the last 40 years with reference to lunatics either before or after trial. According to this view, power has been given by statute, and the duty has been imposed on the Secretary of State, on a certificate that a prisoner is insane, to send him to a lunatic asylum. To my great surprise, when a few weeks ago this power was exercised in the case of Frederick Marshall there was a most extraordinary outcry in the Press, and even in quarters which ought to have been better informed, and it was said that it was an illegal power, or that if it was legal it was inexpedient. I would point out that nothing can be more undesirable than that a man who is a lunatic should be kept for two or three months awaiting his trial in prison, where there are no means whatever of taking proper care of him, and that ultimately a man who is a raving lunatic should be placed in the dock at the Sessions or the Assizes. The law provides that a man who is a lunatic should be sent to a lunatic asylum.

MR. J. G. TALBOT asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that a Board of Guardians in the West of London had come to the conclusion that they could not keep their lunatics in the workhouse, and that the consequence was that the lunatics were sent to prison?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT was understood to reply that the Guardians referred to had acted in consequence of a supposed obscurity in the law. The statute to which the subject was referable was, however, sufficiently clear to make it obligatory upon them to admit lunatics. It was not that they could not admit them, but that they would not.

In answer to Mr. M'COAN,

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT was understood to reply that, under a statute which had existed for 40 years, when a lunatic was committed to prison he could rightly be sent to an asylum?

ARMY—ORDNANCE—THE EIGHTY-TON GUN OF H.M.S. "INFLEXIBLE."

MR. CARBUTT asked the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, Whether it is true, as reported in *The Times* of 18th March, that one of the 80-ton guns of H.M.S. *Inflexible* is unserviceable owing to the scoring of the steel lining, if so

will state whether this gun is a muzzle or breech loader; whether it is a steel gun; whether it has an enlarged powder chamber; where it was manufactured, and the cost; what date it was first fired after being mounted in position on board ship; if he can state approximately how many rounds of powder and shot have been fired by this gun; if it is proposed to replace it by an 80-ton gun taken from Shoeburyness; and, if so, is this gun of the same design; and, how many of these guns are in use?

MR. BRAND: One of the guns of Her Majesty's Ship *Inflexible*, as stated in *The Times* of the 18th of March, is unserviceable in its present condition, but it is repairable. It is a muzzle-loader. It has a steel tube with outer coils of wrought iron. It has an enlarged powder chamber. It was manufactured at the Royal Gun Factories. Its cost was £10,075. It was first fired after being mounted in position on board ship, I believe in 1880. It has fired 86 rounds up to date. It is proposed to replace this gun by the reserve—on loan to Shoeburyness for an experiment against armour plates. The reserve gun is of the same desigu. There are six of these guns in use; four in the *Inflexible*, two in Dover Turret, and beyond this there are two reserve guns.

In answer to a further Question,

MR. BRAND said that to re-line the damaged gun would not cost more than £400, as spare tubes were in hand.

SOUTH AFRICA—BECHUANALAND.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to a statement published in the Bechuanaland telegraphic correspondence of *The Times* on March 16th, to the effect that—

"Montsioa's son showed a letter from Sechele to Mr. Upington, dated December 15th last, requesting permission to come under British rule;"

and, whether Mr. Upington has sent a copy of this letter to Her Majesty's Government; and, if so, what answer has been made to the chief Sechele?

MR. EVELYN ASHLEY: We have no knowledge of the letter referred to in the Question; but Sir Hercules Robinson was a short time ago informed by the Secretary of State that the Bechuanaland Protectorate extends up to Shoshong, and would, of course, therefore, embrace Sechele's country; and the High Commissioner was told to instruct Sir Charles Warren to communicate accordingly with both Sechele and Khama.

ARMY DISCIPLINE ACT, 1881 — THE COLONIAL CONTINGENTS IN THE SOUDAN.

COLONEL STANLEY asked the Judge Advocate General, Whether he will be prepared to state, on consideration of Army Estimates (Votes for Military Law), Under what Act for Discipline the Colonial contingents serving in the field will be placed, and if care will be taken to prevent any conflict between the provisions of "The Army Act, 1881," and the Colonial Acts under which such officers and men are serving; and, whether clear instructions will be given to the officers in command of forces with reference to the point on which such Laws are dissimilar?

THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (MR. OSBORNE MORGAN): By Section 177 of the Army Act, 1881, it is provided that, when any Force of Volunteers, Militia, or other Force is raised in a Colony, any law of the Colony may extend to the officers and men of such Force, whether within or without the Colony, and where such Force is serving with Her Majesty's Regular Forces then, so far as the law of the Colony has not provided for the government and discipline of such Force, the Army Act then in force shall, subject to such exceptions and modifications as may be specified in the General Orders of the General Officer Commanding Her Majesty's Regular Forces with which such Force is serving, apply to the officers and men of such Force in like manner as it applies to the Regular Forces. As to any conflict between our military law and that of the Colonies, I do not apprehend that, as regards the New South Wales Contingent—whose services alone have been actually accepted for immediate operations—any such conflict can arise, because by the two Acts of that Colony under which this Force has been raised—those of the 9th of October, 1867, and the 10th of May, 1871—such Force, when called out on actual service, is made subject to our military law, with certain exceptions, the most important of which—

namely, that which exempts a volunteer from the punishment of flogging—has now, since the abolition of that punishment in our Army, become inoperative. Besides, I have seen a communication from the Agent General of the Colony of New South Wales, which has throughout met the Imperial Government in the most ungrudging and patriotic spirit, stating that, for more abundant caution, the Colonial Authorities propose by local legislation without delay to make their Contingent subject to Imperial military law in cases where the local law has not provided for their government and discipline; and I have suggested that, to prevent any possible conflict, they should be made unconditionally subject to such law. With regard to the other Colonies, I could not, within the limits of an answer to a Question, give the information which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman desires, as it involves the consideration of some 10 or 12 Colonial Statutes; but the subject is now before me, and I hope at the proper time to do so. Meantime, care will certainly be taken to prevent any such conflict as is suggested—if such a conflict be possible—and no doubt instructions will, if necessary, be given to the officers in command with reference to the points in question.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—PURCHASE OF CAMELS.

Colonel DAWNAY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to *The Daily Chronicle* of yesterday, in which the special correspondent at Suakin states:—

"To-day, out of a complete shipload of camels which came to hand not one was sound, and the majority were hopelessly mangy, all of them have therefore been sent back to Suez. Each of these wretched brutes cost, so I am credibly informed, £23, and people are asking who is responsible for paying such an absurd price when Berbera desert camels, superb animals, can be bought for £20."

and, whether it be true that the purchase of camels for the troops at Suakin has been intrusted to a Cairo contractor, who is sending down only camels from the Delta accustomed to green food and water every day, and totally useless for the Suakin-Berber desert?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir; my attention has been called to the subject, and on the 17th and 18th instant I called for special Reports by telegraph. The whole of the camels purchased in and from Egypt are purchased by, and under the responsibility of, the General Commanding in Egypt. In reply to a telegram of the 23rd of February, the General made, on the 24th, the following Report:—

"Two thousand seven hundred camels have been procured from the Province of the Delta with the assistance of the Minister of the Interior. These animals are the ordinary camels of Lower Egypt, up to loads of about 400 lbs. weight. They have been obtained from the same districts as those used during the campaign in the Eastern Soudan last spring, but are, on the whole, of better quality, as they have been carefully selected by Commissariat officers deputed for that duty, and have not been sent in straight by the Mudirs, as was the case last spring, when time did not admit of other arrangements being made. It is impossible to report as to their suitability for work in the desert until they are actually tried, but similar animals at Suakin last year performed very severe journeys continuously, and stood the climate well. No doubt these animals will require more water than camels which have been accustomed to a desert life. Three hundred camels are coming from Aden, but these, although probably well suited to desert work, will not carry a heavier load than from 250 lbs. to 300 lbs. One thousand are to be delivered at Suakin by Mr. J. L. Ross, under contract. They come from the Berbera coast, and are to be delivered subject to approval by a board of officers at Suakin. They will, I am informed, be similar animals to those obtained from Aden."

The detailed Reports as to contracts and prices have not yet been received; but the average cost of the Delta camels is stated to have been about £15.

Dr. CAMERON asked, whether it was true that a shipload of camels had had to be sent back to Suez?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: That statement has also been referred to the General Officer for report, and he will report on the whole matter.

RAILWAY RATES AND FARES BILLS.

Mr. PULESTON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the arrangement he suggested has been now made with the Railway Companies, in reference to the Railway Rates Bills; and, whether it is now understood that these Bills are to be proceeded with, or withdrawn?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: No Sir; I have not received any official reply from the Railway Companies.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE RUSSO-AFGHAN FRONTIER.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government adhere to the statement of the Secretary of State for India, that the Zulfaga Pass, Ak-Rabat, and Pul-i-Khisti, recently occupied by the Russian Forces, are "within those portions which Her Majesty's Government have regarded as within the Afghan boundaries?"

MR. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member asks me whether Her Majesty's Government agree to a statement made by Lord Kimberley, Secretary of State for India. I am bound to say that I do not think that such a Question ought to be put, and I must decline to answer it.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I wish to ask you, Sir, whether the supreme decision on points of Order does not rest with you, and not with the right hon. Gentleman? I should like also to point out that the right hon. Gentleman, in quoting the Question, used the word "agree," whereas I asked whether the Government "adhere" to the statement of the Secretary of State for India. Since that statement was made many remarkable things have happened.

MR. SPEAKER: It is entirely within the discretion of the First Lord of the Treasury to decide what answer he shall give.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Yes, Sir; but I think you have misunderstood me. I did not venture to dispute the right of the Prime Minister to refuse to answer a Question; but I asked for your ruling as to his right to decide whether a Question ought to be put or not.

MR. SPEAKER: If the Question was out of Order I should not have allowed it to be put.

MR. GLADSTONE: Permit me to say that I never suggested that the Question was out of Order. But there are many Questions which, in my opinion, ought not to be put, notwithstanding that they are not out of Order.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I beg to give Notice—I do so with considerable regret—that, in consequence of the impossibility of obtaining any satisfactory answer from the Government to these important Questions, I shall feel it to be my duty to call attention to the discreditable surrender of the Government of all their demands, and of the rights of their ally, the Ameer of Afghanistan, in the only way at the present time open to private Members, on the first available opportunity.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether any approximate date can now be fixed for the commencement of the proceedings for a joint delimitation of the Afghan frontier by Sir Peter Lumsden and the Russian Commissioner, or whether the arrival of the Russian Commissioner on the Afghan frontier is no longer expected.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am not able to fix a date, and I think that it had better be understood that when we fix a date we shall communicate it to Parliament.

SUSPENSION OF EVICTIONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. MACFARLANE asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If it is the intention of the Government to introduce the promised Bill relating to the land question in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland before Easter; and, whether he will give facilities for the Second Reading of the Suspension of Evictions (Scotland) Bill since, under the present Law, tenants may be dispossessed of their holdings in May, whether they are in arrears with their rent or not?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he was afraid he could give no other answer than that which was given some time ago—namely, that in the present state of Public Business, he feared there was no chance of introducing this Bill before Easter, and that exactly the same reason would prevent the Government from giving facilities for proceeding with any other measure.

MR. MACFARLANE asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would give the House a few minutes at the end of Supply, in order to take the opinion of the House on this important question.

[No reply.]

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—THE INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENT.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I have given the right hon. Gentleman

the Prime Minister private Notice that I would ask him to-day what the arrangement for the holidays will be, and also that I would appeal to the Government to put off the discussion on the important question on the Financial Agreement for Egypt until after the holidays, because we have not yet got, and shall not have got until the beginning of next week, the numerous, voluminous, and important Papers upon which that Agreement is founded. I think the right hon. Gentleman will see that it would be reasonable that that discussion should be put off until after the holidays.

MR. GLADSTONE: I will give the right hon. Gentleman the best answer in my power; and I think, perhaps, it would be well that I should not make a final answer to-day, but reserve my final answer until to-morrow, when I shall have had the opportunity of consulting my Colleagues, and when my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer will have had an opportunity of looking into certain matters of procedure connected with the subject. First, Sir, with regard to the holidays. Considering that we did not meet until the 19th of February, and that Easter is not at a very late date, I have arrived at the conclusion that the most convenient arrangement, and the most acceptable to the House, would be to rather narrow our measure of Recess at Easter, and to take more liberal holidays at Whitsuntide. My intention was, presuming that there would be no Egyptian Question to consider, to ask the House to adjourn on the Tuesday in Passion Week, and to meet again on Thursday, April 9. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman asks whether we will agree to postpone the discussion on the Egyptian Question until after the Easter holidays, and he urges that there will be but limited time between Monday and the day alluded to yesterday by my right hon. Friend near me—namely, Thursday in next week—for the discussion of Egyptian affairs. I admit that I was disposed to hope, from the small stress the right hon. Gentleman laid upon the production of Papers at the commencement of the Session, when, I think, they were only produced on the day on which a Vote of Censure on the Government was moved—I was disposed to hope that this difficulty might not have arisen. However, I quite admit it is a serious question, and that the House is entitled to time to consider it. That is one side of the case; but there is another side of the case, which is this—that many postponements have taken place in the operations and proceedings in Egypt with reference to this subject; and any considerable further postponement at a time when practical relief could be granted to Egyptian finances would, I am afraid, be attended with very serious public inconvenience. I would point out this, Sir—that under the arrangement which is proposed by the Government for an international guarantee, as might be expected, the principal part, the leading part—although I do not mean that there is a difference in liability—the leading part, the operative part, falls to Her Majesty's Government, and consequently the proceedings of the House of Commons will be looked to, as I anticipate, by the Legislatures of other States; and I am afraid that a serious postponement by the House of Commons of the decision on this question would cause considerable further delay in consequence of the likelihood that other States will in some degree wait upon our proceedings. Of course there is another alternative, and that is that the discussion might be postponed until Monday in Passion Week. That, at the worst, would give a week for the consideration of Papers, and so far I am able to meet the views of the right hon. Gentleman if he thinks it desirable to press those views upon us; but, if he asks anything more than that, out of respect for him and those for whom he acts, I will take until to-morrow to consider the question; but with the view, as at present advised, I entertain of the interests involved, I am bound to say I cannot give anything like a pledge to agree to the postponement of the definitive Vote until after Easter.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman to substitute Monday for Thursday will not meet the case. It seems to me that this is a matter which really requires fair and full consideration. And, looking to all that has passed during two or three years now and the short interval suggested, I think what I have asked for ought to be granted

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE SUSPENSION OF MR. O'BRIEN.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he wished to call the attention of the Prime Minister to the fact that the Resolution as to the conduct of the Speaker with regard to the suspension of Mr. O'Brien was on the Paper for Tuesday, the 31st, on which day he proposed that the House should adjourn; and he asked the right hon. Gentleman if he would regulate his Motion so as to admit of the Resolution being brought on?

MR. GLADSTONE said, he had already been obliged, with great reluctance, to state to several hon. Members that the Seats Bill did not admit of any delay to allow of other matters being proceeded with. The present intention of the Government was to move the adjournment of the House at 2 o'clock on Tuesday, 31st March.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—GENERAL GRAHAM'S ADVANCE.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he had received any information from General Graham with regard to the reported advance to-day of the Forces under his command?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No, Sir; I have received no information at all to-day from General Graham.

EGYPT (WAR IN THE SOUDAN)—THE SUAKIN-BERBER RAILWAY.

MR. M'COAN asked the Secretary of State for War, What proportion of the Railway plant taken over from Messrs. Lucas and Aird for the Suakin and Berber Railway and shipped respectively from Hull and London was new plant, and how much of it had already been used in the construction of the Hull and Barnsley Railway, or of the London and Tilbury Docks; and, whether, and by whom, it was valued for the War Office before shipment; if so valued, on what abatement on manufacturer's prices for new plant of the same description; and, if not valued, how was its "fair and reasonable price" ascertained?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: About two-thirds of the plant referred to is new. The remainder has been previously used. It is carefully inspected by military officers with technical knowledge before shipment, and on the report of such inspection the abatement to be made from the price of new plant is determined.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY—EXAMINATION IN DOGMATIC THEOLOGY.

MR. THOROLD ROGERS asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that it is the practice of the University of Oxford to subject all candidates for a degree thereat to an examination in Dogmatic Theology, with the alternative of declaring that they have a conscientious objection to submitting to it; and, whether, if this does not constitute a violation of the letter of the 34 Vic. c. 26, s. 3, he will consider whether that Act should not be amended?

MR. GLADSTONE said, that though he had not had an opportunity of referring to the authorities, he was aware that the University of Oxford, compatibly with the law, had determined to continue the old examination in theology; but he was not aware that it was correctly described as dogmatic. As to the second part of the Question, it was a little difficult to have Questions of this nicety and importance propounded for the decision of the Cabinet with only 24 hours' Notice. On the part of the Cabinet he could give no answer to the Question; but his own opinion was that it was extremely improbable that the Cabinet would ask the House to legislate upon the question at the present time and under present circumstances.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. SEXTON asked, Whether it was intended to introduce to-night the three Irish Bills on the Paper (the Constabulary Redistribution Bill, the Registration Bill, and the County Courts Officers Bill); and what had become of the National Teachers Bill, or would it be introduced to-night as promised?

MR. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he intended to move two out of the three Bills on the Paper to-night, as they would not require any lengthened statement, and he had put the National Education Bill down for Tuesday.

NOTICE OF QUESTION.

POST OFFICE—PARCEL POST HORSES.

Mr. ONSLOW gave Notice that on Monday he would ask the Postmaster General, Whether his attention had been called to the disgraceful condition of many of the horses used in the Parcels Post vans; and what was the system employed by the Post Office for a proper periodical inspection of these horses?

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ARMY—ARTILLERY AND RIFLES—THE GARDNER GUN AT ABU KLEA.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT, in rising to call attention to the jamming of the Gardner machine guns at the battles of Tamai and Abu Klea, and of the Martini-Henry rifles during the late campaign, said, that the information which had been received as to these matters showed that they were not satisfactory to the country or to the Army. Of course, it was possible that the failure of the Martini-Henry might be put down to the bad shooting of the soldiers; and there could be no doubt that the skill in firing of our men was not what it ought to be. That was probably due to the mistaken economy which was shown in the matter of rifle practice, for he knew he should be supported by the great majority of the skilled officers of the Army when he said that the number of rounds our soldiers were allowed to fire each year was not one-half what it ought to be. As had been stated by the Commander-in-Chief last year, shooting was greatly a question of expense. The number of rounds that soldiers were allowed to fire each year was not sufficient, and their lack of skill might therefore be traced to mistaken economy. That, however, was a general question well worthy the attention of the War Office; but they had definite statements with regard to the firing in recent battles. More than one correspondent had mentioned the jamming of the cartridges; and he would especially ask the attention of the noble Marquess who represented the War Office to the statement of the Special Correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*. He was not going to say that they should accept the *spes dixit* of the correspondent of a newspaper as absolute proof in a case of this kind; but the correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*—he would by no means say the same of all the correspondents—was a gentleman of remarkable experience, of great judgment and accuracy. The name of Mr Burleigh was well known; he had been through several campaigns, and they might fairly assume that nothing which he deliberately stated was to be altogether disregarded. This correspondent had written that the wildness of aim which enabled the attack of the Arabs to be successful was caused by the fact that hundreds of cartridges jammed after the second or third shot. It was a very serious matter, when a small body of men were sent on a difficult and dangerous march through the desert in the face of thousands of savage foes, that their principal arm of defence should be practically useless after the second or third shot. The correspondent went on to say that officers had informed him that this year their mongrel cartridges stuck worse than ever, and that at Abu Klea he had seen scores of weapons rendered temporarily useless. This statement was worthy the attention of the War Office. If it had not been for the sticking of the cartridges and for the jamming of the Gardner guns it was more than probable that the British square would never have been reached by the Arabs, and some 150 gallant soldiers who were killed would still have been alive, to say nothing of the brave officers who rallied the square. He had himself received confirmation of the correspondent's statement from several officers. Referring to the action of the Gardner gun, under Lord Charles Beresford, at the battle of Abu Klea, Mr. Burleigh stated that during the advance of the Arabs it had been fired occasionally and had performed good service. When, however, it was most wanted—when the Arab attack reached within 300 yards of our square—before three rounds had been fired the cartridges stuck, and the gun was rendered

temporarily useless, an accident to which Lord Charles Beresford declared all machine guns were perpetually liable. The same thing occurred at the battle of Tamai last year. On that occasion one of our squares was broken, and the fate of the Army was imperilled; and he believed those who were on the spot attributed the misfortune mainly to the fact that the Gardner gun got jammed after the second or third firing. The fact that this jamming happened at two of the most critical periods deserved consideration. If these defects could not be remedied in the Gardner and Nordenfelt guns, it was time that the War Office adopted some other system of machine gun which would obviate these dangers. The jamming of these guns could not be due to inexperience or mismanagement, as possibly that of the Martini-Henry rifles might be, because they were under the charge of skilled men—the Naval Brigade and Lord Charles Beresford. The fault must have been either in the machinery of the gun or in the cartridges. This was a very serious matter, for it was above all things necessary that our soldiers should be provided with arms of the most approved and precise character to enable them to cope with their foe in the Soudan. He did not propose to proceed with the Motion for a Royal Commission of Inquiry into these facts which he had placed on the Paper, because he did not doubt that the War Office would be willing to look into the matter, and because he did not wish to stand in the way of the important Motion which stood next on the Paper.

Mr. CARBUTT expressed his gratification that this subject had been brought forward by the hon. Member. There was no doubt that machine guns would play a most important part in the wars of the future, and it was most important that they should adopt the best that could be devised. Machine guns were worked by a handle, and so long as that was turned the theory was that the gun would go on firing. But if some of the cartridges were not very well made, or were a little moist, they would not go off with the same speed as other cartridges, and so remained in the chamber until the next cartridge entered, and either remained in the chamber and exploded, or hung fire sufficiently long to be thrown on to the ground and there explode. Every machine gun yet introduced was liable to this hanging fire; but the Maxim gun, recently invented, was far less liable to this very serious inconvenience. It was an automatic gun, which utilized the recoil, and could fire 600 bullets per minute, and only required the attention of one man. It was an arm of the Service as to the importance of which he believed the Government to be fully alive. With our small Army we were becoming more and more dependent upon mechanical inventions, and there was no arm the Government ought to give more attention to. He, therefore, hoped they would put pressure on the manufacturers and send out a few of these guns to Egypt for the Autumn Campaign.

Mr. BRAND said, he had the pleasure of informing the House that the Maxim gun had already been brought to the notice of the Department, and one was being built for trial. He found some difficulty in dealing with the speech of the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), so far as the guns were concerned, because he had not given the House any authority for his statement.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: I quoted the statement of Mr. Burleigh, the correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*.

Mr. BRAND said, he was aware that the hon. Member had quoted a statement from the public Press; but he desired to have a stronger authority as to the facts. Since the Motion of the hon. Member had been placed on the Paper he had made inquiries as to this matter, and he found that neither at the Admiralty nor at the War Office had a Report been received to the effect that the Gardner gun had jammed. Indeed, the contrary was the case. A Report had been received by the Admiralty from their officer commanding at Tamasi, and his Report with regard to the action of the gun was highly satisfactory, no mention being made of the jamming of the gun in that action. He could not say anything with reference to what had taken place at Abu Klea, because no Reports had been received as to the Gardner guns in that action. If, however, the hon. Member would favour him with any other authority, besides the statement of *The Daily Telegraph* correspondent, he would be happy to make

further inquiries on the point. As to the Martini-Henry rifles, the War Office had received a communication from the General Officer commanding at Korti that, in some cases, the cartridges for the Martini-Henry rifle got jammed at Abu Klea. He had only one remark to make with regard to the letter of *The Daily Telegraph* correspondent to which the hon. Member had referred. If he remembered rightly—quoting from memory—that correspondent stated that hundreds of cartridges got jammed; but in the next sentence he said that there was a "continuous roll of fire," so that the case could not have been so serious as represented in the quotation by the hon. Member. There was no doubt that the jamming took place to a certain extent. The present Martini-Henry cartridge was introduced by a Special Committee, over which Lieutenant Colonel Fletcher presided, in 1871, and it had undergone only slight modifications since then. It had been used since that year in several small campaigns, in not one of which had any complaint been made with respect to the working of the roll cartridge in the Martini-Henry rifles. He thought, therefore, it was reasonable to suppose, until detailed and written Reports were received from the front, that some very special and exceptional conditions affected the Martini-Henry cartridge at Abu Klea. For his own part, he could quite imagine that the sand of the Desert might have had a considerable effect in bringing about the jamming referred to. He could only say that the War Office was fully alive to the importance of this subject. Lord Wolseley had suggested a certain course of action, and his recommendations were now under the consideration of the professional advisers of the Secretary of State on this question. If his recommendations were considered by them to be feasible and desirable, he could assure the House that no time would be lost and no necessary expense would be spared in giving effect to them.

EGYPT (MILITARY EXPEDITION)—ARMY IN EGYPT.—RESOLUTION.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL, who had on the Paper the following Motion:—On Army Estimates, to call attention to the suffering and loss which must result from keeping British troops in the Soudan; and to move—

"That it is not proper that Her Majesty's soldiers should be exposed to the deadly Summer climate of the Soudan and Upper Egypt, and that Her Majesty's subjects should be taxed to protect Egypt, not for Her Majesty, nor for the Egyptians, but for the bondholders foreign to Egypt, to whom the revenue is assigned,"

said, he desired to confine himself specially to the second portion of the Motion. He considered that under all the circumstances it was neither right nor proper that the blood of the people of this country should be shed, or that they should be heavily taxed, in order to protect Egypt for the bondholders. Proceeding to discuss the climate of the Soudan and Upper Egypt, he said the locality in which our soldiers were at present was one of the hottest places in the world, and as a consequence they would be much exposed and suffer very greatly indeed. There were several circumstances which were likely to make exposure of English soldiers in the Soudan more fatal than were the risks encountered in the hot climate of Mooltan. The English troops now in the Soudan were very much exhausted, and they were unprepared to stand a terrible trial. The troops which went to Mooltan were under the excitement of active service; but the troops in the Soudan would have to wait a very long time before being engaged in active service. It appeared that already they were suffering from fever, ophthalmia, and other diseases. We did not know what was really the extra cost of our troops in Egypt and the Soudan, because that extra cost was mixed up with the ordinary cost of the Army. The sum of £100,000 or £200,000 was a mere bagatelle, and it only professed to cover what were called the extraordinary expenses. The average cost of a British soldier, all charges included, he estimated at about £130 per man per annum. In India the cost was about £200 per man per annum. A startling statement had been made by the Under Secretary of State for India, which was that the extraordinary expense for each Native soldier employed by the Government in Egypt was at the rate of £66 per month per man. It certainly seemed extraordinary that a White soldier should cost 1-16th of what a Black soldier cost. There were expenses to be incurred in Egypt which had not to be incurred in India. What number of soldiers were we contributing to the protection of Egypt? He found in *The Times* a tele-

gram from Cairo, which stated that, exclusive of the Expedition at Suakin, we had 6,800 men in Egypt Proper. At £200 per man the cost of this number of soldiers would be £1,360,000. If the total number of troops, exclusive of those at Suakin, were taken at 10,000 men, the Expenditure would exceed £2,000,000 per annum. The House had been already told that it had been necessary to increase the Army by 15,000 or 16,000 men. It was certain that we were incurring an expenditure of £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 per annum, and it was our being placed in this position which led to our difficulties with Russia. He gathered that the Government had practically bound themselves to the protection of Egypt for the next two years.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Member was not touching on any subject appropriate to the Motion to go into Committee on the Army Estimates.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, he was venturing to submit that the Army Estimates ought to be reduced, because a large part of them was due to the employment of our Forces in Egypt.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Member would not be in Order in pursuing that line of argument.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that he would confine himself as closely as he could to the argument embodied in the Amendment which he had placed on the Paper, and which he presumed was in Order, or it would not have been allowed to be printed there. It was apparent on the face of the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer yesterday that Egypt had been surrendered by Her Majesty's Government to the bondholders, to be treated as a sequestrated country, and that consequently neither the people of this country nor the people of Egypt had any direct interest in those finances which were to be protected by our troops. He admitted there were certain common European interests in Egypt apart from the interest of the bondholders, and apart from the interest of the people of Egypt; but what he said was that it was not a question peculiar to England. It was a question of common European interest, and why should we pay for all? Why should we pay for the interest of European nations, and not for ourselves alone? It seemed to him that was in reality a price we paid for the privilege of going to Egypt. We went to Egypt at the expense of the lives, of the blood, and money of the people of this country; and it seemed to him that the Government had practically told other nations that this country would protect their interests at the expense of British taxpayers if those nations would allow them to occupy Egypt. Not only were they not called upon to offer this protection, but no one was grateful to them for it. On the contrary, nearly every European nation was more or less hostile to this country for the course we had adopted in Egypt, and at least one European nation—Russia—had taken advantage of our entanglement. He could not hope to carry his Amendment, but he ventured to submit it by way of protest.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is not proper that Her Majesty's soldiers should be exposed to the deadly Summer climate of Upper Egypt, and that Her Majesty's subjects should be taxed to protect Egypt, not for Her Majesty, nor for the Egyptians, but for the bondholders foreign to Egypt, to whom the revenue is assigned,"—(*Sir George Campbell,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he hoped the House would excuse him if he did not follow the hon. Gentleman at any length in the speech he had just made. He must say that he had had very considerable difficulty in following the arguments of his hon. Friend, who seemed to have altogether mixed up in his mind the Estimates which they were about to discuss in Committee and the Supplementary Estimates which it was proposed subsequently to ask the House to agree to. The hon. Gentleman had not only mixed up the Estimates on the Table, which contained nothing whatever relating to the Soudan, but he had also mixed up the question of the Financial Arrangement which had been lately concluded by Her Majesty's Government. A good portion of the hon. Member's speech referred to the object for which Lord Wolseley's Force was now at Korti, and he expressed the opinion that it was not with the view of an ultimate advance to Khartoum, but for the protection of Egypt. He (the Marquess of

Hartington) denied that; but even if it were so the House was not called upon that evening to express an opinion upon it, because the Estimates on the Table did not contain any item of expenditure relating to the occupation of the Province of Dongola or of the Upper Nile. All the operations there would be made the subject of debate on the Vote of Credit, and it could hardly be in Order to discuss them now. He understood the hon. Member to protest against any expenditure on the British garrisons in Egypt being charged to the British ratepayer; and he also understood him to contend that the whole cost in respect of that garrison would be very much larger than what was expected. As to the first point, it seemed to him to be one that could not be conveniently discussed on that occasion. There would shortly be an opportunity of discussing the whole question of Egyptian finance, when the arrangement of the International Agreement was brought before the House. The question then to be discussed was whether the Financial Arrangement was equitable to Egypt, to the bondholders, and to the ratepayers of this country; and whether the Revenues of Egypt were capable of defraying the whole of the expenditure on the British garrison. It would also be considered whether a larger sacrifice in respect of the charge to be made on the Egyptian Revenues on account of the British garrisons ought to be called for from the bondholders. The hon. Member, in his calculations with respect to the cost that would be involved by the British occupation of Egypt, seemed not to have taken into account the difference between men being engaged in active military operations where a very large amount of transport was involved, and the case where men were simply in garrison. The hon. Member spoke of the addition of 15,000 men; but they were not to-night discussing anything about 15,000 men. The addition of 15,000 men, if that was the number they proposed to add, would be for the distinct purpose of carrying on the military operations in the Soudan with the object announced to the House. The Army was not increased last year or the year before on account of the occupation of Egypt; it was not proposed to be increased this year on account of the occupation of Egypt. Therefore, it was absurd to argue that the whole cost of 6,000 men was the proper charge to be made against the Egyptian Revenue. The finances of Egypt could be discussed when they were regularly brought before the House; and he trusted the House would not be disposed to wander from the proper and very important subject they had to discuss in connection with the Estimates that evening. He perfectly understood that the hon. Member, and a few others who had from the first been opposed to the occupation of Egypt by British troops in any form, should take this opportunity, among others, of making their protest; but he did not think his hon. Friend himself desired that the House should now take up its time in reviewing the whole subject of Egyptian finance.

Mr. LABOUCHERE inferred from the remarks of the noble Marquess that there was nothing in the present Estimates connected either with the Soudan or with our occupation of Egypt.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON said, the hon. Member misunderstood him. He would explain, when they were allowed to go into Committee, the way in which the Estimates related to the occupation of Egypt; but he might say that they had no reference to the operations in the Soudan.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he understood that his hon. Friend wished simply to protest against the expenditure of money in Egypt, and he had struck out of his Amendment any reference to the Soudan, so that he was not only in Order, but justified in objecting to this expenditure. It appeared that there was something in the Estimates which related to the garrison in Egypt, and the contention was that the cost of that garrison ought to be borne by Egypt, and not by this country. That was a fair contention, and it was only reasonable that his hon. Friend, and those who thought with him, should raise the question. Under the circumstances, however, he would suggest that his hon. Friend should ask the leave of the House to withdraw his Amendment; or, if the House declined to grant that leave, that he should not go to a division, but in Committee move a reduction of the Vote.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ARMY—THE SEAWARD DEFENCE OF THE MILITARY PORTS.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. W. H. SMITH, in rising to call attention to the inadequacy of the defences of our military ports, said: I do not desire to exaggerate the importance of this matter; but if I refer to the language held by the First Lord of the Admiralty, I think I shall show it is one which deserves and requires the very serious attention of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for War and of this House. It will be in the recollection of the House that I asked the noble Lord, two or three days ago, whether it was his intention to make provision for the seaward defence of Portsmouth, Plymouth, Gibraltar, and Malta. I confine myself to these ports, because they were mentioned by Lord Northbrook. That noble Lord, in his speech in the House of Lords, December 2, 1884, said—

"The other important question is, whether it is not necessary, in consequence of the increased power of guns of late years and the changes in that respect, to make some alteration and improvement in the seaward defences of our great military ports at home and abroad—I mean such ports as Portsmouth, Plymouth, Malta, and Gibraltar. That subject has also been under the consideration of my noble Friend the Secretary of State for War, and it is probable that he will have proposals to bring before Her Majesty's Government."—(3 *Hansard*, [294] 413.)

In the position which the noble Lord occupies in the Government, the language which he has used is a distinct recognition of the importance of the subject. I think the statement is strong, because of its moderation; and therefore I ask the noble Lord whether he is prepared to take steps to improve those defences? This is not the first time that I have drawn attention to the necessity of doing so; and if I have refrained from insisting on the weakness of particular places, or the insufficiency of the means used for defending them, it has been from a desire to avoid anything which would cause embarrassment to Her Majesty's Government in the discharge of their duties, and also from the desire which everyone of proper feeling would have not to give occasion for panic or alarm. There is no occasion for panic or alarm if we exercise the common prudence, judgment, and energy which I ask for from Her Majesty's Government. The interpretation which I put on the answer of the noble Lord to a Question which I put to him the other day on the subject is that there must be delay, that of two things this is of the less importance, and that the energies of Her Majesty's Government must be devoted to a great extent to strengthening the defences of the coaling stations, and, therefore, that they are unable to take the steps recognized as necessary for the seaward defences of our military ports. I do not think that is a sufficient answer. If the military ports are insufficiently defended, the admission that our coaling stations should be better protected appears to me to be an argument that the military ports should be adequately defended. I understand the statement to be that we are justified in leaving half our defences unprotected, because a certain expenditure is to be incurred for outlying stations. I shall be told that we have gone on for several years, and that there has been no danger. My answer is, Why have we forts or other means of defence unless there is danger? But again I fall back upon the statement of Lord Northbrook as to the necessity for improving the defences of our military ports. Perhaps I shall be told that I am doing injury to the public interests by what I am about to say. I do not sympathize with the view held by the Department, and probably by the Government, that injury would be done by stating plainly the circumstances of the case. I believe the very reverse. Just consider what we are. We are servants of the Crown and the country; and if it is contended that it is our duty to withhold from the Crown and the country the simple facts of the case in which the country is so deeply concerned, I do not agree with that view of the case. If there is sufficient defence the country ought to know it. If the defence is insufficient, the country ought to know it too, because it is absurd to suppose that those abroad who take an interest in the matter are unacquainted with the facts. Everyone who reads the newspapers, and every Member of the House, is well aware that there are naval and military officers, some attached to Embassies, others not so attached, whose duty it is to keep Foreign Governments informed as to the

condition of our defences and of our military and naval power. Therefore, to say that we should be giving information which might be injurious to the country in the event of a war is to keep up a delusion injurious to the public interests. But I will so far respect the position maintained for a great many years as not to state precisely what I know of the weakness and strength of particular ports. I will call them A, B, and C. I have information as to the calibre of guns, the number of guns not mounted or not having carriages, where the amount of recoil is greater than the space behind the guns, and a vast amount besides, which any man or any newspaper may get that chooses to take the trouble, and that without any breach of confidence or betrayal of trust by those whose duty it is to take charge of such places. I will now speak of A. No further steps whatever have been taken to organize the submarine mine and torpedo defence. Very weak in sappers (one weak company), who would require weeks instead of days to lay out these mines. Torpedo boats are necessary; but in the absence of the Fleet—and it would be at sea in time of war—there are no trained men capable of working them. I hear that representations on the subject have been made to the authorities; but nothing has been done. B.—The stores are incomplete, and the trained men could not lay the mines in less than three weeks. The ground to be defended has not been determined upon. C.—No boats. No station fixed or plans decided upon. No Royal Engineer torpedo officer here at present. No torpedo depôt yet established. In fact, if a war suddenly broke out with a Naval Power, this port would be quite unprepared with regard to the submarine defences. I mention these three ports out of six or seven of which I have information. If the noble Marquess wishes it, I will give him much more accurate details and complete information which will satisfy him that I am speaking with full knowledge of the facts; but I can say something more. As to mercantile ports, there has been a proposal for several years to make use of and train local Volunteer Engineers; but as yet no stores have been furnished for practice, nor any serious steps taken to train the men, although the artizans who constitute these corps are in some cases particularly well adapted for the work, and anxious to take it up. Proposals have for several years been in existence for creating submarine defences; but they have never gone beyond proposals. There are plenty of men, not necessarily Royal Engineers, who would be glad to submit to the necessary discipline, would be always found on the spot, and would be anxious to take up the work. There is no cause for alarm if we set to work at once; but it is to be regretted that schemes that have been on paper for years should never get beyond paper. We cannot afford to be less than ready with our materials for warfare. Is it to be supposed that a Foreign Power intending to make war upon this country would have the courtesy to postpone offensive operations until we could overcome every difficulty that might impede our action? The greatest security for peace is the fact that a nation is prepared for war; and I believe that we can only insure peace by making the best use of the materials and organization at our command I trust that we shall receive some assurance from the Secretary of State for War that the work which ought to be undertaken in connection with our military and mercantile ports shall be taken in hand at once. A large expenditure is not required; but a very great responsibility will rest upon the Government if they fail to avail themselves of the means now at their disposal for the successful prosecution of this work.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have no complaint to make of the manner in which this subject has been brought before us. On the contrary, I think the House is indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for the careful, moderate, and guarded statement which he has just made. I gather that the chief subject to which he desires to call attention is what he considers to be the condition of unpreparedness of our submarine mining defences. The House will not expect that I should follow closely the right hon. Gentleman's criticisms upon the subject, because by the very proper mode of description which he has adopted in his references to our forts he has put it out of my power to correct any mistakes into which he may have fallen. However, if the right hon. Gentleman will give me privately the information which he has received in

regard to any deficiency in the submarine defences of any forts I shall be very happy to inquire into the matter, and to give the House such further information as may be in my power when we come to consider the special Votes. I may now make a few general observations which I think will be thought to a certain extent satisfactory. Three extra companies for the protection of submarine mines of the principal military stations are being formed. Although this has been effected at some sacrifice of the strength of some branches of the Corps of Royal Engineers, yet the importance of the branch is considered so great that no consideration can be allowed to interfere with the formation of these companies. Local aid is being developed in the formation of Militia companies for Submarine Mining Companies in Devonshire and Kent. The wants of coaling stations are being met by the formation of a special battalion for training the men. A sum is being taken in the present Estimates for raising a native battalion which shall take part in the submarine mining defence of Singapore, Hong Kong, and other important coaling stations, and some of these stations have certainly been very much strengthened. At Chatham the Submarine Mining School has been formed into a separate battalion. To obtain the advantage of having a Submarine Mining Company, a large number of intelligent boatmen and other intelligent men have been employed, and recruiting is going on at seaports. At present the Corps of Royal Engineers labour under a certain disadvantage compared with other corps in the absence of any chance of promotion from the ranks. This will for the future be remedied by the formation—for which some provision is made in the present Estimates—of a Coast Corps of Royal Engineers on lines similar to those upon which the Coast Corps of Royal Artillery was formed. The Corps will take charge and superintend the submarine mine defences of important stations, and take part in the recruiting, drilling, and training of Militia and Volunteer Submarine Mining Companies. The plans of the defences of the principal forts have been lately revised in consultation with the Naval Authorities, in order to obtain unity of action between them and the Military Authorities. I am not able to state what has been actually expended on the preparation of submarine mines; but very considerable expenditure has been, and is still being, incurred. The right hon. Gentleman will, therefore, see that the subject is not being neglected. I should like to say a few words upon the more general question raised by the right hon. Gentleman in the Motion which he has placed upon the Paper—namely, the question of the defences of our principal military stations. When the fortification of those stations was provided for by Lord Palmerston—by the raising of a long loan for between £7,000,000 and £8,000,000—it was intended that the cost of the necessary armaments should be defrayed out of the annual Estimates; and in 1860 it was estimated that £5,250,000 had been employed for this particular purpose. From 1860 to 1878 £3,250,000 were expended, leaving a balance, according to the original Estimate, of £1,750,000 still to be provided. About £750,000 has since been spent, so that about £1,000,000 is still due on the original Estimate; but the increased cost of heavy ordnance, although, of course, the number of guns required at the works has considerably diminished, has considerably increased the total cost of the necessary arms, and it is now considered that about £1,250,000 are still due to complete the approved defences of the principal military stations at home and abroad. The alterations in the character of ordnance have also rendered necessary certain structural alterations in the works themselves, and also, in some cases, the construction of new works, and works in new and more advanced positions; and for these purposes, and for the completion of preparations for the new mode of defence, it is estimated that something like £1,000,000 will be required in addition to the works for submarine mining. There is, therefore, about £2,250,000 to be expended before the defences of the great military ports at home and abroad can be considered completely satisfactory. I am very far indeed from saying that this expenditure ought to be very long delayed; but the question of how and when, and in what mode it should be proceeded with is one of very considerable difficulty and embarrassment. Certainly it is no Party question, because both Parties in the country have acquiesced in the delay that has been in-

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curred. The difficulty is not only the very great difficulty common to all Governments of finding the money, but it is necessary that we should be satisfied that we had got something which, if not absolutely final, presents a reasonable prospect of being satisfactory for a very considerable number of years before calling upon Parliament to make a great effort in the matter. Up to the present time I am bound to say no such stage of finality can be said to have been reached. Then, Sir, the question of the time when we ought to make a great effort is one that requires a great deal of consideration; and, above all things, we ought to avoid by a hasty expenditure making the country indisposed subsequently to make those efforts and sacrifices which it may ultimately have to make. If these ports and military stations are defenceless, we should not be justified in acquiescing in any further delay; but that is by no means the case. Although the armaments have not been completed up to the approved scale, the defences are exceedingly strong. The opinion, I believe, of military authorities derived from recent experience—from experience such as that gained by the attack on the forts at Alexandria, and from the still more recent experience gained from the attack by the French Fleet on the Chinese forts—the opinion is that the defence of fortifications is gaining ground in comparison to the power of the attack; and both at Alexandria and the Chinese forts I believe that the general opinion is that the forts, if defended by a resolute garrison, would have been able to offer a very successful resistance to the attack of even a powerful fleet. I believe that our forts at any rate, even in their present position, are exceedingly strong. It is extremely doubtful whether any Power or combination of Powers would venture to attack them, unless they were assured that they would not themselves be exposed to the possible attack of our own Fleet. They are, I think, strong enough to make a successful resistance, except under a combination of circumstances almost impossible, if not utterly out of the question. There is, therefore, no cause whatever for a panic—there is no cause for alarm, or for a hasty and ill-considered expenditure. We have upon our hands at the present moment an expenditure of a very heavy nature, not only in connection with military expeditions, but also for Imperial defences. We have also undertaken to protect a number of Colonial coaling stations; and that, in the opinion of the Admiralty, is a service of a most urgent nature. We have also undertaken and are making provision for an expenditure of more than £1,500,000 in the next five years in an addition to the naval guns, and we have also to make some provision for replenishing military equipments and stores. These services tax severely, I will not say the resources of the country, but certainly to a very considerable amount the resources of the Military Departments, both engineering and manufacturing The Engineering Department at the present moment is occupied almost to the utmost in connection with the Expeditions that are in hand, and also in connection with the works in progress at the coaling stations; and I doubt whether it would be in the power of this Department to undertake any very heavy expenditure at the present time. The House, however, may rely upon it that as soon as there is any reasonable prospect of a finality in these matters being attained, and that as soon as we are convinced that we can assure the country that it will have its money's worth, we shall not hesitate to make such proposals as will provide for the complete security of these important stations, and to call upon the country to make such sacrifices as may be necessary for the purpose.

COLONEL STANLEY said, he agreed with the noble Marquess that this was no Party question; but it was very desirable that it should be discussed apart from other questions of Army administration, and in such a manner as would show to the House and the country that the Government were keeping themselves in accord with the general desire that these stations should be strengthened. There was only one point in the speech of the noble Marquess with which he should have found fault, and that was contained in almost his last sentence. The noble Marquess said the House might rest assured that whenever the Government saw a reasonable prospect of finality they would take such steps as they might deem necessary to complete the defences of the country. That was just laying down the one condition that was most difficult of fulfil-

ment. There could be no such thing as finality in these matters. What the country was fairly entitled to ask was that the Government, without committing themselves absolutely to the expenditure of money on schemes which might be valueless before the time came for their completion, should yet make such preparations as might enable them in the event of any emergency to meet it without delay. Over and over again it had occurred that before schemes for forts and other extensive works were completed a great change in the original plans had had to be made at great expense owing to various circumstances. The noble Lord had overlooked the fact that his right hon. Friend was well within his right in making the observations that he did, having regard to the statement of the noble Earl at the head of the Admiralty, who, in "another place," gave as a ground for showing that the ships of the Navy were sufficient for the calls that might be made on them the fact that—

"This subject was also under the consideration of his noble Friend the Secretary of State for War; and it was probable that he would have proposals to bring before Her Majesty's Government."—(3 *Hansard*, [294] 413.)

The House and the country were very anxious to know what these proposals exactly were. When they came to discuss the Votes themselves the Government would have to be pressed in greater detail on these matters. There certainly was an impression abroad that there was not quite that state of preparedness at some of these ports which the country had a right to expect. It was not enough to have the materials on the spot. There should be in the hands of the authorities some intelligible plan as to the means by which they would carry out their system of defence, and from time to time this system ought to be tested. He believed that when the late Government left Office there were very ample and carefully worked out plans for the defence of some of the principal ports of the Kingdom. Of course these plans required revision from time to time; but it was most important that such plans and schemes should be brought up to date, and kept in a condition to be worked efficiently without delay.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL desired to know whether any progress had been made to find out whether the large ports were willing to contribute themselves towards their own defence? The time for action had now come; and he hoped that the noble Lord would, in the statement he was about to make, re-assure the country by making it feel that no step would be left untried to settle this most important question upon a sound and adequate basis.

SIR HARRY VERNEY said, he had never heard such an idea expressed in the House before. In his opinion, the whole country was equally interested in the defence of the various ports; and it was altogether out of the question that the inhabitants of places like Plymouth and Portsmouth should be called upon to contribute specially to their defence, as the noble Lord opposite suggested.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, it was not his suggestion. The Secretary of State for War had stated, in reply to a Question last year, that the matter was under consideration how far a locality should contribute to its own defence.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that the subject under discussion last year was that of commercial harbours as distinguished from military ports, and he had thrown out the idea whether commercial harbours should not contribute towards their own defence; but his remark did not apply to naval ports like Portsmouth and Plymouth.

SIR HARRY VERNEY said, that was a very different thing. He should like to know whether the guns were ready for the forts if they were required to be used?

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL said, there was a part of our Dominions in North-West America which possible contingencies might render it desirable for us to look after. The coast of British Columbia, for a distance of several hundred miles, was absolutely without a harbour. During the months that preceded the ascent of our Fleet to Constantinople, Russian ships of war were cruising off the coast of British Columbia. There were two powerful Russian iron-clads, but no British Force at all. The strength of our squadron on this coast was one iron-clad and three corvettes, a force which was totally inadequate to protect the enormous range of coast, practically speaking, extending from Australia in the South to Behring's Straits in the North. Russia,

no doubt, was fully alive to the importance of those possessions, and her first step, in the event of war with this country, would probably be to seize the principal harbour, which commanded the whole coast of British Columbia; and if they did this the whole of the North-West Coast would be at their mercy. He desired, however, to call the attention of the House to the subject of which he had given Notice—namely—

"To call attention to the dissatisfaction caused by certain conditions of Army service as at present regulated, and to move, That, instead of the system of stoppages under which the soldier is called upon to pay for certain indispensable articles, these should be supplied free of charge, and the scale of pay altered, if necessary, in consequence."

He believed that there was no point in the Military Service which caused such widespread dissatisfaction as the system of stoppages of pay. In the proclamations by which recruits were attracted to the Army certain attractions were held out for military service. There would probably be no dissatisfaction on the part of non-commissioned officers and men were the terms of the proclamation adhered to; but there was no reason why the War Department should enlist soldiers under what were practically false pretences. A short time ago there was placed at the door of the Horse Guards a proclamation which contained a direct mis-statement. It contained the catalogue of supposed advantages which men obtained on enlistment, and among them there was a statement that free rations were supplied. In the official paper it was true that a free ration of bread and meat was stipulated for. That was, no doubt, correct, because the soldier received 1 lb. of bread and three-quarters of a pound of meat per day. But he asked the House whether, if they enlisted a soldier on condition of his receiving free rations, and then gave him only 1 lb. of bread and three-quarters of a pound of beef, they were fulfilling the spirit of the proclamation under which they had attracted the soldier to the Service? He said they would not be fulfilling its spirit. The soldier got what was barely sufficient to maintain him in life, but not sufficient to maintain him in health. He received 1s. a-day, which, no doubt, he calculated upon having to spend; but, as a matter of fact, he had to supply himself out of this 1s. with certain necessaries, such as tea and other groceries, and vegetables. When he enlisted he was said to be supplied with a free kit, and that was to last him for the whole time of his service—namely, seven years. In this kit he was supplied with two shirts, and if they did not last for the seven years, as he was obliged to wear a shirt under his tunic, he was obliged to supply the deficiency out of his 1s. a-day. By the Regulations the soldier was bound to pipe-clay his belts—the pipe-clay he had to provide himself. Then, again, he was compelled to have the articles in his kit marked, and he was charged 1d. for each article marked. Indeed, the deductions from the soldier's pay, consequent upon and inseparable from the conditions of his service, amounted from 4d. to 7d. per day. In addition to the Regulation stoppages, there was a form of stoppage which came under the head of barrack damages. It was unfair and unjust that men should be charged for the inherent defects of articles supplied by the Government. As an instance of what he said was of daily occurrence, he mentioned that a soldier in a certain barracks in London was ordered to affix to the chimney-piece of the barrack-room a board with certain Regulations upon it. The board was supplied by the Department duly marked. In order to hang up the board the soldier had to bore two holes in it, and he was assured by the superior officer of that soldier that it was absolutely impossible to bore the holes without splitting the board. There was no cause for surprise, therefore, that the board in the course of being fixed was split, but there was considerable cause for surprise to find that the soldier was charged 10d. for a new board. Also with regard to brushes, they would not last for seven years, and the soldier had to supply new ones at his own cost, the result being that the cleanest soldier suffered the most in this respect. Then, again, a soldier was compelled to shave, and yet he was only supplied with a 1s. razor, which certainly would not last for seven years. The whole system of stoppage out of pay was a bad one, and the first Secretary for War who devised a means of putting an end to it would deserve the thanks of the Service. He asked the noble Lord the present Secretary for War to satisfy himself by personal inquiry as to the justice of the complaint of the soldiers upon this point.

If he found that they had a real grievance, he was bound to devise some means for remedying it. With regard to the question of deferred pay, he might say that there was a very strong inducement to the soldier to draw his £21 at the expiration of his first term of seven years' service. Many soldiers married without leave, and at the expiration of their first term of service they felt themselves compelled to draw their deferred pay. He suggested that at the expiration of the first term of service a soldier, upon re-enlisting, should be allowed two or three months furlough. If this course were adopted, they would keep many good men in the Service, and should induce them to re-enlist at the expiration of their first term, and thus we should greatly increase the efficiency of the Army as a whole.

MR. GOURLEY remarked, that what was required for the better defence of our commercial harbours was an organization of all our available Forces on the spot, whether Regulars or Volunteers.

COLONEL MILNE-HOME also desired to impress upon the Secretary for War the necessity for taking steps in order to prevent in some instances the calls which were now made upon the soldier for providing part of his kit out of his pay. He should do away with some of the stoppages; but before going into that he wished to say a word as to free rations. He considered it most desirable to increase the meat ration. Three-quarters of a pound of meat was absurdly little—hon. Members would not dare give such a quantity to their own servants. The ration might be free, but it was not a "ration." As to the constant re-issue a free kit, he thought that was out of the question, some men being much more careless than others. He had seen soldiers lose everything in a few weeks, whereas others could keep their kits for months most economically. There were, however, exceptions—such as the Autumn Manœuvres—where he should make special allowance. The question of deferred pay was most important. It was, indeed, highly important to see that everything was done to induce good men to stop in the Army. He was afraid, however, some Regulations had gone against that, short service being so much encouraged.

CAPTAIN MAXWELL-HERON urged that they should do away with the stoppages altogether. He would rather see the British soldier have some defined pay and no stoppages at all. He knew from experience that men entered the Service thinking they had 1*s.* a-day, whereas they soon discovered how false their hopes were. There was an important leader in *The Times* last year on this subject; and he thought it could not receive too much consideration, and he hoped the Secretary for War would not allow it to escape his attention. A reform in the direction would very much stimulate recruiting and increase the popularity of the Service. As regarded the deferred pay, he had always been against it, and he believed it interfered with the desire of soldiers to re-engage. He considered that soldiers, at the expiration of their term of service, should be allowed some more on leave. If this were done he believed many would rejoin the Service, and would prove very valuable additions to it.

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER said, the House would not expect him to make a lengthy reply to speeches which, although of an important character, might, he thought, have been better delivered on the same points in Committee. He could assure the hon. Baronet that this subject had been fully discussed by the Royal Commission for Recruiting; and General Peel, in introducing that Report, said that in order to make the Service more attractive it was better to increase the pay than make any alterations in the stoppages. He held that 2*d.* a-day would be more attractive. That was at a time when it was desirable to obtain more men for the Service. He thought hon. Members could hardly be aware of the enormous amount of money involved in this question of the stoppages. They must do one thing or another; they must leave the pay intact or reduce it *pro tanto*. The amount, if they were to concede this to the soldier, would be £400,000, if valued at 2*d.*, and £80,000 was the sum estimated for stoppages for necessaries. If, on the other hand, the pay was to be reduced *pro tanto*, they should have to reduce the daily pay below 1*s.*, which was the proverbial sum always recognized by the recruit. He believed this would be most unpopular in the Army and prejudicial to recruiting. Some system of

stoppages for necessaries was obviously required, for otherwise the public would not be protected against the improvident soldier. They must also have stoppages for barrack damages, or great harm might be done. On all occasions on troops marching out or marching in two officers attended—one belonging to those going out and one to those coming in, and the damages were assessed in their presence. This was done in order that nothing but what was really fair should be assessed against the troops going out. There was great variety in the stoppages as between different ranks and different regiments. On active service the soldier had a free ration, and allowance was made for the wear and tear of his clothing. Having regard to the fact that the ranks were now full, and that they were under no necessity for holding out extra inducements, and considering the enormous sums involved in the stoppages, he could not, if it had been made, agree to the Motion of the hon. Baronet Sir Herbert Maxwell.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to*.

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES (NUMBERS).

DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

In the Committee

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir Arthur Otway, in moving the Estimates which have been laid upon the Table, or rather in moving the first Vote for Men, and making the general Statement which is usual on these occasions, I regret that I have to say that the Estimates which we are now considering cannot be treated as final Estimates—they are rather of a provisional character. They do not represent the full demands which will have to be made upon the country for the Military Services of the year. The Estimates were in course of preparation—in fact, they were almost complete—before the catastrophe took place which we heard of in February, and, consequently, before the measures which were decided upon by Parliament, and which were subsequent to that event. The full demands which we shall have to make upon the House for the Military Services of the year cannot, therefore, be made known until a Vote of Credit is asked for after Easter. We are obtaining, as quickly as we can, the information and collecting the materials upon we hope to be able to lay before the House a full statement of what the other demands for the Military Services of the year will be; but until we have obtained that information it would be impossible, I think, and it would be inconvenient, to enter into any discussion at the present time as to what will probably be required for the Expedition in the Soudan. I will first state to the Committee the basis upon which these Estimates are framed. In addition to the ordinary Home and Colonial requirements, and for keeping 6,000 men in Lower Egypt, they also provide for an estimated expenditure of £500,000 on account of the Bechuanaland Expedition; and, as I have already stated, they provide nothing either for the Nile Expedition, or for the Suakin Expedition, or for the Suakin and Berber Railway. The original Estimate presented in the present year for the Military Services of 1884-5 was £15,930,600. In August last we obtained a Vote of Credit for £300,000 on account of the Nile Expedition, and in the course of the Autumn Session we obtained a further Supplementary Estimate of £1,000,000 for the Nile Expedition, and £675,000 for the Bechuanaland Expedition. These additions to the ordinary Estimates of the year amounted to £1,975,000. Since the Estimates we are now discussing were laid upon the Table we have had to ask for a Supplementary Estimate for £942,000, of which £672,000 were for the expenses connected with General Graham's Suakin Expedition, and £270,000 were Supplementary Estimates in respect of the ordinary Services of the year. Therefore, we have thus had £2,917,000 voted in addition to the ordinary Estimates presented last year. That brings up the total sum voted for Military Services for 1884-5 to £18,847,600, as against £17,820,700 for 1883-6, being a difference of £1,026,900. But the whole of the Supplementary Estimates to which I have just made reference, with the exception of £270,000, were for special war expenditure, these Supplementary Estimates providing a special war expenditure of £2,647,000. Therefore, the sums Parliament voted for what may be called the ordinary Military Ser-

vices of the present year is £16,200,600. Of the Estimates I am now moving only £500,000 is for special, or war expenditure in connection with the Bechuanaland Expedition. We ask for £17,820,700 for the ordinary Services of the year, which is an excess over the amount voted for the ordinary Service of the previous year of £1,120,100. The occupation of Egypt accounts for £150,000 —that is to say, the estimated additional cost of the Army of Occupation in Egypt is £250,000, of which only the sum of £100,000 is estimated to be borne by Egypt. Since these Estimates were laid upon the Table a slight modification has been made in the Egyptian financial arrangements, by which a larger sum than £100,000 will be paid by Egypt; £70,000 more will be paid by Egypt in aid of the Army Estimates; and the charge, therefore, in respect of Egypt, will be £70,000 less than that which is shown on the Estimates. To that extent the £150,000 required will be reduced. There has also been a considerable reduction in the military contributions to be received from the Ceylon Government, owing to a smaller part of the garrison being regarded as necessary for Colonial purposes. This, and some minor items of loss by exchanges in other Colonial military contributions, will entail an additional charge on the Estimates of £46,700. The increase of regimental and other establishments of the Army, to which I will refer by-and-bye, will cost £65,000. There is an excess in addition to the Store Vote of £680,000, and also an addition to the Works Vote of £98,300. I may state, however, that these figures do not precisely agree with the statement of the differences that was circulated to Members with the Army Estimates, because the accuracy of the statement has been affected by the circumstance to which I have referred—that since these Estimates were presented, and since the statement was made showing the difference between these and the provisional Estimates, other Supplementary Estimates have been voted containing charges for ordinary expenditure amounting to £270,000. The additional cost of the Auxiliary and Reserve Forces amounts to £79,000; and there is an increased charge for deferred pay of £30,000, and for the Clothing Vote of £17,500. The last item is, I believe, caused by the issue of additional clothing to the troops. The sum of £22,000 is required, in addition to that taken in last year's Vote, for rewards to inventors. There is also a miscellaneous increase of £7,600, causing a total increase of £1,195,700. On the other hand, it is subject to a decrease, owing to a larger estimated receipt from India and from the Non-Effective Vote of £75,000, making the total increase in ordinary expenditure of the present over the past year of £1,120,000. It is right that I should now give the Committee some explanation as to the progress of recruiting and the proposed Establishments for the year. Last year I stated, in moving the Estimates, that the large deficiency in the number of the Army which existed in 1883 made it necessary to amend, in certain respects, the term of enlistment, and steps for that purpose were being taken at the time I presented the Estimates. Up to that time the result of recruiting had been satisfactory; but the deficiency had not been materially restored. The experience of the present year has justified the anticipations which were formed as to the effect of the measures taken with regard to recruiting. The result of these measures is, that we have raised in the past year—I speak of the real, not the financial year—35,653 recruits. That addition to the number of recruits not only met the loss of the year itself, but has also given us a net gain of 7,500 men serving with the Colours. The number of effectives on January 1, 1884, including rank and file and non-commissioned officers, was 173,529 men; on January 1, 1885, it was 181,000, or an increase of about 7,500. This rate of progress in recruiting has been maintained during the portion which has elapsed of the present year. We have raised, up to March 1 in the present year, 7,442 recruits, and the number of effectives on that date was 184,209. In comparing the actual numbers with the Establishment, as voted by Parliament, I may remind the Committee that unless some such special measures had been taken as have been taken in the present year to enable us to recruit over the Establishment strength —unless this strength is exceeded at some time or other, there must be a deficiency at the time of the season for relief and for some time afterwards.

The Marquess of Hartington

The loss of the Army in India is concentrated in the months in which the reliefs are effected, but the gain to the Army is only caused by a gradual process of recruiting, which goes on during the year; and therefore, unless arrangements are made by voting an excess of 2,000 men this year to enable our Establishment to be in excess of the number agreed to by Parliament, there must be a normal deficiency at this time of the year. In March, 1884, on the Establishment of 165,386 rank and file, there was a deficiency of 2,846 on the British Establishment, and 3,570 on the Indian Establishment, or a total deficiency of 6,416. In last year's Estimate 2,600 men were added to the Establishment. With this increased Establishment of 167,986 rank and file, we have now an excess of 1,903 men on the British Establishment, and the deficiency has been reduced to 1,459 on the Indian Establishment, leaving a total excess of 450 men. The increase in the numbers to which I have referred has been mainly, though not entirely, due to the recruiting of the year. To a certain small extent it is due to other reasons, as, for instance, to the measures which were taken in August to meet the requirements of the Expeditionary Forces. In August, under the 87th section of the Army Act, men were detained with their battalions who were actually serving in South Africa or in Egypt. We cannot at present state the exact number of those who were so detained, and who, in the ordinary course, would have been passed into the Reserves; but it is not very large. Further, in August, an order was issued enabling men who had joined the Reserve previous to August 10 of last year, and who had three years' service to give, to rejoin the Colours. Up to the 1st of January in the present year 1,455 Reserve men had so rejoined. I have already stated the measures taken in February upon the receipt of the news of the fall of Khartoum.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL: What is the number of men who have rejoined the Colours?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Between the 10th of August, 1884, and the 1st of January this year, 1,455 men have rejoined; but I may add that our offer was to a certain extent a limited one. No man was allowed to rejoin who had not got three years still to serve. I have already stated, in moving the Supplementary Estimates, the measures that were taken in February on the receipt of the news of the fall of Khartoum in connection with the larger military operations which, in our opinion, then became necessary. I will not repeat a statement of those measures, for it would be partly a repetition and partly an anticipation of what further measures we may have to state when we make our proposal for a Vote of Credit; but on this occasion I may add that the Reserve men who have volunteered to rejoin the Colours will, on their discharge, receive deferred pay from the date of their transfer to the Reserve, and not only from the date of their rejoining the Colours. The scheme of Establishment which was laid down in 1881 by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, by which a large increase was made to the Establishment, has to a very great extent been disturbed by the exigencies of the Service, and has never had an opportunity of coming into real and normal operation. Notwithstanding the difficulties, however, under which this scheme has suffered, it has nevertheless worked, as far as it has had a chance, exceedingly well. The object of the scheme was to enable us, without delay, and without having immediate recourse to the Reserves, to send abroad a few battalions in the event of a small war, such as had frequently occurred. That object has been attained, and, I think, something more than attained. We have been able to despatch and maintain for a considerable time abroad 16 Infantry battalions of the Line in addition to three battalions of the Guards, these being the battalions which practically formed the First Army Corps spoken of by my right hon. Friend. The 1,400 Reserve men, of whom I have spoken as having joined the Colours, were not until February necessarily appointed to the battalions serving abroad. We have now, in addition to the ordinary Colonial battalions, eight battalions with Lord Wolseley on the Nile, besides two battalions on the line of communication. General Graham has three battalions of the Guards and three of the Line, and we have also four-and-a-half battalions in Egypt. In Egypt and the Soudan at present there are 20½ battalions, numbering 16,400 men, and by the last Return the efficient

officers commanding the depôts also say that the regiments are more closely identified with their own districts. As to the quality of the recruits, that is, of course, a matter on which there would always be room for difference of opinion; but last year there were only 371 passed by the medical recruiting officers who were objected to by the commanding officers of the regiments to which they were sent. They are now under examination. There is no doubt that a large number of the recruits are enlisted young. That, as has been explained, is almost inevitable in the case of an Army raised entirely by voluntary enlistment and with a period of short service. It would be impossible, under such circumstances, to secure the men you require at all unless they were enlisted comparatively young. There is, however, no reason to believe that these men are deficient in physique as compared with the recruits obtained on other occasions; and although some who are enlisted at an early age may at the date of their enlistment be apparently somewhat deficient in physique, yet it is found that in a great number of cases they rapidly improve after a short period of service. There is no doubt that the large number of recruits that we obtained in the course of last year has been to some extent due to the depressed condition of trade and the want of employment. But there is, I think, reason to believe that the Service is becoming more popular, and that a great many of the prejudices that formerly existed, not altogether without foundation, against the Army as a Profession are now disappearing. Every effort is being made to render the Service more popular, and also to make the condition of the Reserve men who are leaving the Army a better one. Two Registers have been established, which we suppose will be found useful in this respect The first is a Register of Recruits belonging to each parish in the district; and the next —which is one of some importance—is a Register of Applicants for Civil employment. I am glad to say that some assistance is being given in many regimental districts by persons of great influence, with the object of securing employment for Reserve men on leaving the Service. Nothing can be of more advantage to the Army than assistance of that description, because nothing can tend more to raise the character and increase the popularity of the Army than assured prospects of obtaining employment on their discharge from the Colours by men of good character. The permission to extend service, which was applied tentatively in 1883, has been made permanent. Experience has shown that there was no risk that so large a number of men as to cause a serious burden to the country would desire to extend their service, and we now no longer apply the system tentatively, but have made it a permanent one; so that a considerable step has been made in a direction which many hon. Members desire to see taken- namely, that of giving, as far as possible, free play to recruiting and allowing the men to enlist for a short time; or, if they desire it, to make a Profession of the Military Service. It is, as I have said, premature to form any estimate yet of how far the men enlisted for short service in the Guards will desire to extend their service. As to the Establishment, the net increase in the Regimental Establishment provided in these Estimates is 1,665 men. The principal items are an increase in the Infantry Establishment of 1,015; in the Medical Staff Corps of 222; in the Royal Engineers of 144; in the Ordnance Staff Corps of 82; and for the Submarine Mining Corps, of which I spoke a short time ago, 252 men are taken. The Infantry Establishment will be so modified by the subsequent arrangements which it will be necessary to explain in connection with the operations in the Soudan that it would be useless to enter into details now of measures that were intended for the ordinary Estimates of the present year, but which will be altogether modified by subsequent arrangements All that I need say at present on that point is that in consequence of the difficulty experienced in providing drafts for battalions for Indian and Colonial service, the lowest Battalion Establishment will be again raised, so that no battalion will have an Establishment of less than 650, including the depôt. As to the Militia, during the year 1881 no less than 41,960 recruits were enlisted, including re-engaged men. The number of recruits enlisted between the trainings of 1881 and 1882 was 23,432; between the trainings of 1882 and 1883 they were 32,049; and between the trainings of

1883 and 1884 they were 36,067. The Committee will see that there has been a gradual and steady improvement during the last three years. Of those 36,067, 27,000 elected to drill on enrolment. In consequence of the new system of training and the abolition of bounty, absence without leave has greatly decreased. Between the years 1876 and 1881 the percentage of recruits absent without leave from preliminary drill varied from 24 to 12. In the years 1881 to 1883, when the 10*s.* bounty on enlistment was partially abolished, the percentage of absentees dropped to 3·9 and 4·7. And last year, when the bounty was entirely abolished, it dropped to 1·4. I have already stated, and need not now repeat, that measures have been taken for the embodiment of a certain number of Militia regiments. All I would add is that the Returns show that the regiments selected for embodiment have responded to the call made upon them in the most creditable manner. With regard to the Yeomanry, there is nothing that I need now mention except that £3,500 has been provided to allow 3*s.* 6*d.* for two extra troop drills, the condition for the issue of this allowance being that at least two-thirds of the enrolled strength of the troop are present at the drill. As to the Volunteers, the reports are also most satisfactory. The number of efficients has increased from 199,000 in 1882 to 208,000. There is a proportionate increase in the number of officers and non-commissioned officers who have become proficient, and also of officers who have passed in tactics, the latter now numbering 627. The Force is now being armed with the Martini-Henry rifle; and, as has been stated on previous occasions, it is under consideration whether, in consequence of being supplied with a more accurate arm, some amendment might not possibly be made in the qualifications for efficiency. The change that is being made seems to offer a good opportunity for this improvement. A sum of £40,000 is provided for the camping out of Volunteers, an addition of £8,000 upon the Vote of last year. Last year the number of Volunteers applying for the privilege of going into camping training was so large that the Vote was inadequate to camp out more than 80 per cent of the applicants. Eventually, I believe the sum allotted allowed every man who attended the camp to receive an allowance. The next point to which I think I ought to call the attention of the Committee is the Vote for Military Stores. There is a large increase in the Vote upon last year, the increase being £680,000, exclusive altogether of what was granted as the sum necessary for war service. But in addition to that amount, as I have already stated, £235,000 has been voted for the ordinary service for the past year. This Vote, therefore, standing in the Estimates for next year, shows an increase of £915,000 over the original Estimates presented to Parliament for the present year. The Vote of £235,000 on a Supplementary Estimate this year was practically obtained because it was found that for many years past insufficient provision had been made for some portions of the Service. The constantly increasing demands for Naval ordnance virtually starved the provision for the Land Service. There has been a constantly increasing charge for gunpowder for the heavy guns, and there has also been an increase in small arms and ammunition in consequence of the increase of practice on the part of both the Regulars, the Militia, and the Volunteers. All these things have had the effect of reducing the amount which has been available for other purposes. The £235,000 for the present year, or the greater part of it added to the Supplementary Estimates, has been spent in making a larger addition to the provision for cocoa powder for the heaviest kind of guns. It has also been voted in part for bringing up the reserve stores which I have mentioned. It is estimated that an annual addition to this Vote of £115,000 for gunpowder and for small arms ammunition will be required; but in addition to this increase for which we ask this year it will be necessary, in my opinion, for some years to come to increase by about £150,000 the Votes for the general reserve and for necessary equipment, accoutrements, and miscellaneous articles. The subject of ordnance both for the Land and Sea Services has been sometimes dealt with in the general statement on this subject; but, in my opinion, it is at present much too large and important a question to be dealt with in a general statement. The Report of the Ordnance Select Committee to which reference has been made in a

question put by the right hon. Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and answered by my hon. Friend the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Brand), has not yet been presented; and I think it would be well, before any statement is made on the subject of the naval guns or of heavy ordnance generally, that we should have that Report, and should have time to look into it. It would then be possible to make a fuller statement than can be made now.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL: When will the Report be presented?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: The Report itself has not been received, and it would not be convenient to say anything about laying it on the Table until the Report has been received by the Department. There will, no doubt, be opportunities for discussing it either upon the Naval Estimates or upon the Vote itself for heavy ordnance. All I need say with regard to the question now is that the increase of the Vote will provide £75,000 for additional plant at Woolwich for the manufacture of heavy guns for the Navy. It will also provide £350,000 for the manufacture of additional guns for the Naval Service, which it is expected will have to be continued for five years. It also provides £155,300 for the commencement of the armament of the Colonial coaling stations. The work at these stations was commenced last year at Aden and Hong Kong, both locally and in the provision of ordnance, and steps have been already taken which have materially increased the strength of these stations pending the completion of new works. In the Supplementary Estimates £35,000 was provided for the works which are in progress at these two stations, in addition to £9,000 which has been provided by the Colonial Government or the Government of India. Next year a commencement will be made at Trincomalee, Singapore, Simon's Bay, Sierra Leone, St. Helena, the Mauritius, Jamaica, St. Lucia, and Port Elizabeth. The sum which is provided in these Estimates for submarine work and armament stores and vessels is £195,000, in addition to £67,000 which we anticipate will be provided by the Indian and the Colonial Governments. The pressure at the present moment, as I have already stated in a previous discussion on the Engineers' Department, is very great. A large number of officers are on active service in Egypt and the Soudan, or in South Africa, and a large number are always employed in India. In consequence of the strain upon the Department there has been some greater delay than was anticipated in providing for an accurate plan and survey of these works. In addition there has been, or there may be, some delay in consequence of those everlasting changes which are brought about in the progress of Artillery science which so constantly occur. This delay has necessarily at the present time interfered with final decisions as to the best modes of mounting the heaviest guns. I may add that experiments are in progress which will finally decide the question. Until it is decided progress can only be made to such an extent as is not likely to be affected by the changes required by the advance of Artillery science. On the whole, looking at the state of pressure in the Engineers' Department, and at the uncertainty which attends the question of mounting the heaviest artillery, we are of opinion that the Votes I have already referred to, and which will have to be provided in the present Estimates, will make a sufficient provision for the year. The noble Lord the Member for West Essex (Lord Eustace Cecil) asked what progress has been made on a subject which was discussed last year—namely, the Defence of Commercial Harbours. Now the subject of the defence not only of coaling stations, but of military ports and commercial harbours, has received a great deal of attention in past years. For reasons, however, which I stated in the course of a previous discussion, we do not think it desirable to push forward these works with greater rapidity than we are doing. We believe that the energy of the Engineering and Manufacturing Department may be for the present year advantageously applied to the construction of the defences of the Colonial coaling stations, and the pressing forward of the supply of heavy guns for the Navy. What our views are with regard to the defence of commercial harbours I think will be more conveniently and fully discussed when we come to the Vote for Fortifications. There is a good deal to be said upon it, but it would be inconvenient to include it in a general statement. I believe I have now referred to most of the principal points which are contained in the

Estimates. I feel very much indebted to the Committee for the attention with which they have listened to me, and I beg to move the first Vote for Men.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 142,194, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886."—(*The Marquess of Hartington.*)

COLONEL STANLEY: I think all the Committee must have followed with great interest the Statement of the noble Marquess; and I feel that, on the whole, so far as he has spoken of the operation of the measures which have been taken, and especially of recruiting, his Statement is one which, on the face of it, must appear very satisfactory to the Committee. I only hope that the noble Marquess is not led away entirely by the mere Reports made to him of the numbers and of the general disposition of the men who enlist, but that he will also take some means of personally acquainting himself with the general appearance and character of the recruits whom he gets in that way. I know a very striking instance in which this was done, and it shows that the difficulty existed then as now in the matter of recruiting, and that it is not a difficulty of the present day only. Some few years ago, when an unusually large number of recruits had been obtained, and it was naturally supposed that recruiting was going on satisfactorily, I remember my then Chief and Predecessor, Viscount Cranbrook, going down to one of the large camps and asking that the men who had enlisted in the current year, the year before, and the year previous, should be put into different lines. When this was done the effect was very striking, and it showed that we were getting recruits capable of a good deal of development. Each year showed a difference in the height and development of the men. Those who had only been in the Service for one year were the shortest and least developed; those who had been in two years were taller; while those who had been in three years were taller still. The inspection showed that during the whole of the three years the men had been only developing, which indicated what the real difficulty is in all these matters. I must say that the noble Marquess has very frankly recognized that difficulty. In this country, I suppose, as matters now stand, considering the state of the labour market, and the conditions of the voluntary service, you must expect to get a large number of very young men; and if the authorities receive them with their eyes open, and are prepared with measures to meet the difficulty that arises in consequence, then well and good. The Service under such circumstances is, perhaps, not more at a loss now than it was in former times. I have ventured to point out the difficulty; but I do hope that the noble Marquess and the officers immediately responsible to him are not led away merely by Reports of mere numbers, but that they really look to see for themselves what kind of men they are getting. What the noble Marquess has said tends to confirm my belief that we were right in 1879, and in the case of the Army Act in 1881, in laying down the principle of free trade in recruiting. The noble Marquess has gone further in that direction, and has seen his way to allow the men to extend their service still longer. The only way that we can deal with the voluntary service of this country is to make it a free service, and to allow men to extend their time by their own free will, and not by entering into arbitrary engagements. Get the best men you can get, and when you have got them, do the best you can to keep them. If that is done with due regard to the interests of the men on the one hand, and the good of the Service on the other, I am quite sure the voluntary service may be made to succeed in this country. I join issue with a good many of my military friends who find fault with the statement in the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, which, however, the noble Marquess did not refer to, as to the number of men who take advantage of the liberty they have in the first month of their service to purchase their discharge. That number is increasing, and a good deal of inconvenience is thrown upon the Service in consequence; but I believe that more good is done by allowing men to go freely and honestly than by keeping them against their will, and tempting them almost to desert. On the other hand, the point, I think, deserves the attention of the Secretary of State for

War and the Military Advisers of the Crown. Allowing for all the freaks which bring men into the Service in ignorance of the sort of life they are going to lead, it does not seem to me to be right; but, on the contrary, it seems to me that there must be something wrong when the percentage of men who get their discharge so very soon is so large, and when so large a number of men who take to a soldier's life get tired of it so very soon. It is not easy to say where the fault exactly lies; but the fact does appear to me to be something rather odd, and I think something might be done, without any undue relaxation of discipline, to make the first month of a soldier's life a little more pleasant than it now is. What with drill, school, and the variety of things which he is obliged to be taught, I think very judicious arrangements are required, and we have a good index afforded in the circumstance that so large a proportion of these young men purchase themselves out of the Service after the first month. My hon. and gallant Friend sitting near me (Sir Robert Loyd-Lindsay says that 1,751 men have bought themselves out within the first three months. That is, of course, a very large number; but it is very much better that they should buy themselves out than that they should go without leave or without any repayment to the public. Still, it is a circumstance which is not altogether satisfactory. Then, when we come to the noble Marquess's Statement, I find after all that it is a little difficult to do what is usual—that is, enter into criticism—because, as my noble Friend, with his customary frankness, told us, neither the Establishments nor the Estimates which we are now asked to vote are, in point of fact, really the Establishments and Estimates for the year. On both sides we are told that the real Estimates for the year and the number of men are to be dealt with on a future occasion, and I presume upon a Vote of Credit, which will form the subject of a future discussion. If it is understood that the discussion, whenever it comes on, is to be a real discussion, and one which will give all the proper opportunities for criticism, I think there is nothing more to be said upon these points now. But there are certain other questions upon which I observe the noble Marquess would also like to defer the consideration until a future occasion—questions relating to guns and works. There is no doubt a disposition to agree that as all the information is not before us, these matters should not be discussed at present, as we are hardly in a position to discuss them; but although inconvenient, it would be better to discuss them now, and would be even less inconvenient, than to be placed in the position we once found ourselves in of being called upon to discuss them upon Votes which may be brought forward and forced through under pressure of time in the month of August. If that is going to be the case, then I say, whatever the inconvenience, let us discuss them now, because otherwise the postponement of them until a future occasion would virtually be the putting off of any discussion whatever. I need not say that the noble Marquess did all in his power to bring on the discussion; but that was the result, and if we consent now to postpone the discussion, it must be with the distinct understanding that a reasonable and fair opportunity, in the full sense of that term, is given to us, and that we shall not be put off, as on a former occasion, when we made a similar request. I should like to say that I hope the attention of the noble Marquess has been directed, as I think it has been, to the double recruiting which will be necessary two years hence, when the Reserve men of two successive years are going down from the Colours at the same time. The Reserve men who have continued with the Colours now for certainly another year will, when they claim to leave the Colours in order to go into the Reserves, produce an abnormal drain upon the Regimental Establishment, and a consequent strain upon the recruiting. There will not only be the ordinary demands of the year to meet, but the extraordinary demands occasioned by the rolling up of arrears which are being saved now by the men remaining with the Colours. That is a point which the authorities will do well to look to, if they have not already done so, in order to guard against the battalions being suddenly depleted. I am glad to hear, although I can only discuss it in the absence of positive information, that the noble Marquess is going to bring up the strength of the lowest battalions to 650. I think I am responsible for the provisions by which

the lowest battalions were brought up to 450; but still I am free to admit now that that was by no means a satisfactory arrangement, for the tendency of small battalions is to throw a very undue and, in many cases, a cruel amount of hard work on the very few men left in the battalion to perform it. And everyone knows that there is a good deal of work to do, whether the battalion is large or small; and when you come to small battalions, and more than the ordinary duty has to be done from day to day, the work becomes very oppressive. The addition to the Store Vote—I have no doubt the noble Marquess will be able to defend it—but it certainly seems to have been very large and considerable. I noticed one expression which fell from my noble Friend with regard to the Ordnance Vote. He said that the Army Vote in some years had been a good deal starved for the sake of the Navy. I am very sorry to hear that that has been the case. Of course, we know that there always has been in connection with the Ordnance Vote an increasing pressure on the part of the Navy; and it seems to me that the time is very fast approaching when it will become a question for consideration by the authorities, partly for the sake of independence, and partly for the sake of the Votes, whether the Naval Service relating to naval guns will not have to be altogether separated from the Army Service. I suppose that it is pretty generally known that the Army in all these matters, as far as I am aware, endeavours to be loyally subservient to the more pressing wants of the Navy. If there are any guns to be made, it is the Navy and not the Army that gets the best guns. It was so when the 35-ton gun was first designed. I am speaking from memory, but I think I am right when I say that the 35-ton gun was designed for the Army; but the Navy having found it a better gun than their own, the guns were handed over from the Land to the Sea Service. And so it has always been; and although I speak with great respect of the authorities, and only express my own opinion, I cannot help thinking that practically what the whole thing will come to before long is this—the Army will manufacture its own field guns and small guns specially for the Land Service, and the naval guns, with all their complicated fittings, will become, as they ought properly to become, part of the Naval Service, and be voted in the Naval Estimates. There always had been, and there always must be, a great deal of friction in matters of detail between two great Departments. It was so in the case of the gun carriages. When they were on four wheels there was very little difficulty; but when the carriages became part and parcel of the ships, and were worked by hydraulic machinery, it became an almost imperative necessity that the Navy should be consulted about the fittings which had to be provided, and the result was that the gun-carriages for the Navy were transferred to the Naval Votes, and ever since that arrangement has been carried out. That was so even in my time, when the arrangements were not so elaborate as they are now. It think it was a step in the right direction, and now that new problems and complicated questions have sprung up in connection with naval gunnery another move in the same direction will very likely have to be made. When that is done, I hope we shall not have the Secretary of State for War getting up in his place and saying, what I am afraid many other Secretaries of State might with truth have said before him, that the Army Votes, for some years past, have been starved on account of the Navy. There are many other questions which I might ask, but they may, perhaps, be more fitly asked when we come to the Gun Vote; for I have every confidence that the noble Marquess will give the Committee an assurance, and will fully carry it out, that there shall be a real discussion, and not a sham one, on the question of guns. I should like to know what further trials have been made with respect both to machine guns and the repeating arms of our troops in the field? I know that other Services have been making experimental trials in these things, and I should like to hear whether the War Department have got beyond experiments upon a small scale with one or two guns, and whether they are trying repeating rifles and field guns of various kinds upon a larger scale? We had an interesting discussion a short time ago upon machine guns, and I think the question is one which the country is watching with considerable interest, and one in which a general hope is expressed

that Her Majesty's Government will be fully alive to the advantages and value of these guns; and, while they have their own patterns already tried and approved, that they will not entirely lose sight of the newer inventions which are springing up from day to day. The noble Marquess told us about the Votes for the coaling stations. I was especially glad to hear that at last something is going to be done for Simon's Bay. Probably there is no station which, under all conceivable circumstances, is more important to our trade. There may be circumstances in which even Aden might become of less importance than it is, and in that case Simon's Bay would, of course, become still more important than it is at present. Without going into these matters—for it would be obviously inexpedient to enter into details—I do hope that the question has been looked to from the point of view of maintaining coaling stations which will enable a main route, both in regard to commerce, and, if necessary, in connection with a military force for the protection of commerce, to be kept open under all circumstances, at all seasons, and at all times. There are a good many minor matters which I might refer to; but it is hardly expedient that I should dwell upon them now. There are two or three questions, however, which I may reserve for the discussion when the Vote of Credit is asked for; but before I pass altogether from the general question, there is one thing which I omitted just now, and that is to ask a question. There is an impression—I do not know the details, and I am not in a position to state the matter as a matter of fact—but there is a very wide impression that the Cavalry squadrons which have been sent abroad have been made up, to an undue extent, by contributions from other squadrons at the expense of the efficiency of those which have been left behind. I do not know from what causes it proceeds, whether the demands of foreign service have been of a more than usually rigid character than formerly, or that the class of horses has deteriorated, or that there are not horses enough in the ranks which are fit for the work they have to undertake. But whatever the cause, it is a matter of notoriety that the Cavalry regiments have to be made up to a far greater extent than was formerly the case, and nothing can be more painful to an officer in command than to find his men asked to volunteer from the regiment for service in another. No officer likes to see his best men going away, though it may be for the public service that they should; and when the horses have been well trained and well looked after to see them taken away at a moment's notice and drafted into another squadron or another regiment to which they do not properly belong is certainly not pleasant. If this complaint is well founded, I hope that special attention will be paid to it, and that greater care will be taken, either as regards the purchase of horses, or, in keeping up the number of the establishments, to keep up also the number of horses required, and to keep them in a state of efficiency. There are several minor questions upon which I may ask for information at some future time, but I do not think it worth while to take up the time of the Committee with them now; but I do hope that the noble Marquess, when he rises to reply to all the questions that may be put to him in the course of the discussion, will be able to assure the Committee that if this Vote is, as a matter of necessity, to be passed to-night, we shall have a real and ample opportunity of discussing the great and important questions connected not only with gunnery, but the defence of our coaling stations, and the other questions to which I have referred. I do not wish to say that there is any undue suspicion on this side of the House; but the very fact of our having been cut off from such an opportunity once before obliges us to exercise the caution which proved experience renders necessary. These are all the remarks I have to make. I think the Statement of the noble Marquess, on the whole, is highly satisfactory, but I hope that in all these matters he will not be satisfied with the mere numbers given to him, but that he will look into the figures himself.

Mr. CAUSTON said, he was sorry that the noble Marquess, in the course of his very interesting Statement, had made no reference to the Staff Clerks, to the question of whose position he had kindly said, on a former occasion, he would give his consideration; but he took that to have been an unintentional omission, and hoped that in the course of the evening either he or the Financial Secretary (Sir Arthur Hayter)

would make some reference to that deserving body of men. When he put their case before the House last year, he took the opportunity of paying what he considered a just tribute of gratitude to the noble Marquess, when he said that the Quartermasters highly appreciated what he had done for them. But unfortunately he had since then received several communications from Quartermasters intimating that he was under a delusion, and that all the benefits, which he was under the impression that they had received, were nothing but myths; and, rightly or wrongly, the Quartermasters thought that they were the most friendless body of officers in the Army. They considered that they were slighted at Head Quarters, and that their services were hardly appreciated. He was glad to hear that evening, from the noble Marquess, that every effort was being made to render the Army more popular. He was sure that the noble Marquess had every desire to include in that statement a body of men who had always been regarded as a useful body, and who had now the feeling he had described; and he hoped that something would be done to redress the grievances of which they complained. The few remarks he should make on their behalf that night he proposed to divide into two parts; he should refer to their financial grievances, and to their grievances of a more sentimental character. His remarks applied not only to the Regimental Quartermasters, but to those of the Commissariat, Ordnance, and Medical Departments. They considered that during the past 40 years their duties had considerably increased, and that they were considerably more important—in other words, that their duties had really doubled; and they considered that during that time, instead of having gone forward in the way of promotion or money, they were in a worse position now than they were 40 years ago. One of their grievances was that, by the re-organization of the Militia, Quartermasters were deprived of their chance of serving with the Militia and of receiving what they had been in the habit of doing before—namely, their pensions from the Army and pay from the Militia. They also alleged another grievance to be that they were the only soldiers who could not get any paid promotion for services in the field; and—although they performed many important field duties, and had recently shown this in the Soudan, where they ran the risk of losing their lives, and where they had lost a greater proportion of men than any other class of officers, comparing numbers—they said they were treated not as combatant officers but—he did not want to say with contempt—in such a way that their claims and services had been quite overlooked. Another grievance which they put forward was, that whereas before the establishment of the Army Clothing Department Quartermasters had been in receipt, in connection with the clothing arrangements of regiments, of an annual sum of something like £150, and whereas the Colonels of regiments had been compensated for the loss they had sustained by the establishment of that Department to the extent of £500 per annum, the loss of the Quartermasters had been recognized to the extent of £30 per annum only, by Royal Warrant dated 28th of January, 1875, in place of the amount which they had generally received. He knew that he might be told by his hon. and gallant Friend (Sir Arthur Hayter) that this £150 had never been paid direct from the War Office, but that it had been received direct from the Colonels of regiments; but the case of the Quartermasters remained substantially the same. Again, by the formation of the Army Pay Department they had been deprived of their chance of becoming Paymasters, with the very great and largely increased advantages attaching to that position. Those advantages had been considerably increased since the Quartermasters had been refused admission. The Regimental Quartermasters could formerly succeed to Paymasterships, and the Commissariat and Ordnance Quartermasters used to be assistant and sub-assistant Commissaries, and could rise to the highest grade of Commissaries. In January, 1876, before the Army Pay Department came into operation, there were no less than 24 ex-Quartermasters fulfilling the duties of Paymasters, and their grievance on this point was that the remaining and future Quartermasters were made ineligible for the Pay Department, and that the full pension which they could now obtain was £200 instead of £450 granted to Paymasters. Therefore, a great grievance had to his mind been inflicted on

the Quartermasters, especially those who were serving at the time when the Army Pay Department came into operation. He would say no more in regard to the financial side of that question, on which he thought he had dwelt at sufficient length, than that he hoped his hon. and gallant Friend would consider that the Quartermasters had a substantial financial grievance. He would now touch on the sentimental grievance.

The CHAIRMAN said, that without saying the hon. Gentleman was out of Order, he thought he was pursuing a course exceedingly inconvenient in Committee. The hon. Gentleman was going into details on that Vote, which would come under discussion hereafter. It would be impossible to say when the Vote would be got through if the hon. Gentleman pursued that course with regard to it.

Mr. CAUSTON said, he was, of course, desirous of falling in with any suggestion that might come from the Chairman, and he was taking the present course with the object of putting the Committee to as little inconvenience as possible; because otherwise he should have placed a Motion on the Paper with regard to the grievances in question which would have come forward on the Motion "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair." Therefore, unless the Chairman desired him to abstain from further remarks upon that subject, he should prefer to continue.

The CHAIRMAN said, that he was not prepared to say that the hon. Gentleman was out of Order, but that the course he had been pursuing, of entering into all the details of the question now, was inconvenient to the Committee.

Mr. CAUSTON said, that, under the circumstances, perhaps, of having gone so far, he should save the time of the Committee by proceeding. With regard to the sentimental grievances, he might remark, as apart from the financial grievances, that they would, if redressed, benefit the Quartermasters' position much, and cost the country nothing. In the first place, the title of Quartermaster was originally intended to indicate the individual who carried out particular duties; but the Quartermasters were under the impression that the title was now used as a brand upon those officers who by merit and experience had risen from the ranks. ["No, no!"] He did not profess to have any great technical knowledge on this point, but he was in a position to state that the opinion was that the title of Quartermaster was a brand; and those officers said that those who rose from the ranks by merit should have the rank of Lieutenant or Captain, as other officers had, and that the title of Quartermaster should follow as a matter of course. The honorary and relative rank of Captain given to Quartermasters after 10 years' commissioned service did not raise them from the lowest rank amongst officers in their regiment or Department, and their names appeared at the end of *The Army List*. Therefore, it appeared that promotion from the ranks, instead of being what he was sure all desired it should be—a reality—amounted to what might be called a sham; and the Quartermasters objected that, having risen from the ranks, they, as officers, were unfairly branded by that fact. The noble Marquess a short time ago had been good enough to grant him a

"Return of all the officers commissioned from the ranks of the Regular Army since 31st January 1840, exclusive of Riding Masters, Quartermasters, officers of the Coast Brigade of the Royal Artillery, officers of the Army Hospital Corps, Sub-Inspectors of Army Schools, and those who were commissioned for bravery in the field."

Now, he was not going to say one word disrespectful of those men who had been promoted from the ranks; but he wished to point out that of the total number of 58 men so promoted 44 were promoted after a service of less than 10 years. One had been promoted after from two to three years' service; 10 after from three to four; 12 after from four to five; eight after from five to six; six after from six to seven; two after from seven to eight; three after from eight to nine, and two after from nine to 10 years' service: the total number of men promoted after between two and ten years' service being, as he had stated, 44, out of a total of 58. He was not going to ask why they were promoted, or make any observation upon their promotion at all, because he was delighted to see men rise from the ranks; but the Quartermasters did feel it a great hardship that, having obtained their commissions after long, good, and faithful service, they should remain stationary with regard to rank. He would point out to the Committee

that, in respect of the last 100 Quartermasters appointed, the average service in the ranks had been 18 years and nine months. He said it was—and the Quartermasters thought so—a great hardship that others should, after such short periods of service as he had mentioned, take precedence of Quartermasters in the matter of promotion. For whereas the 58 men included in the Return quoted had promotion and pay open to them to the fullest extent, the Quartermasters were blocked at the honorary rank of Captain, and, as he said, after longer and probably more important service. He thought after those remarks it was unnecessary for him to detain the Committee at greater length; but he might express the hope that he had made out a case for the Quartermasters by showing that they had both a financial and a sentimental grievance. The noble Marquess had told the Committee that evening that every effort was being made to render the Army Service more popular; and he thought he had brought before the Committee the case of a body of officers which, in the interest of making the Service more popular, was deserving of favourable consideration.

General ALEXANDER said, he had certainly expected that the hon. Member for Colchester (Mr. Causton) would have brought forward this question on the Motion for going into Committee of Supply, which he thought would have been the more convenient course. However, as the hon. Gentleman had raised the question in Committee, and as he (General Alexander) took a great interest in the subject, the Committee would perhaps allow him to refer briefly to one or two points which the hon. Gentleman had not alluded to. It was true that by a process of giving a little here and taking away a little there in 1881, the magnificent result had been achieved of giving Quartermasters an extra 4*d.* per day. There was also a slight pension increase; for whereas up to that time they had pensions of £182 10*s.*, in 1881 they obtained £200 a-year. At the same time, the rank of Captain was given to Quartermasters who had served 10 years as such, and the rank of Major on retirement. He believed that this advance in rank was appreciated very much, and he would remind the Committee that it was a boon which cost the country nothing. But the Quartermasters would prefer to be made Captains after seven years, instead of after 10 years, as arranged in 1881. He would like the Committee to hear what was the position of a non-commissioned officer accepting the position of combatant officer, and what was that of a non-commissioned officer accepting the position of Quartermaster. While the combatant officer might, and often did, rise to the highest ranks in the Service, of Quartermasters it might be said—"Once a Quartermaster, always a Quartermaster." He had himself known some non-commissioned officers who had risen to the very highest positions in the Service. After 10 years' service Quartermasters attained the rank of Captain, with 12*s.* a-day. Then, comparing the position of Quartermasters with that of Paymasters, he pointed out that, whereas the Paymaster received on appointment 15*s.* a-day, the Quartermaster only received 9*s.* a-day, and whereas the Paymaster, after 10 years' service, received £1 a-day, the Quartermaster only received 12*s.* a-day. Again, on retirement, the Quartermaster received a pension of £200 a-year, while the Paymaster received no less than £350 a-year. And there was another grievance of which the Quartermasters complained—namely, that only one-half of their service in the ranks was allowed to reckon for pensions. Then, whereas the duties of Paymasters were light and intermittent, and were often performed by clerks, those of Quartermasters were extremely laborious and constant. It might be said that the Paymaster had more responsibility. But that he (General Alexander) entirely denied. The Quartermaster had in his possession a greater value in the shape of stores than the amount which the Paymaster could hold at any particular time. Then, as the hon. Member for Colchester had said, they felt very much their exclusion from the Paymastership in 1877. That was the work of Viscount Cranbrook, then Mr. Gathorne Hardy, who was at the time at his wit's end to obtain promotion for officers, in consequence of the unsatisfactory abolition of purchase, and who induced combatant officers to leave the ranks for the position of Paymasters. The Quartermasters were then excluded from becoming Paymasters. In 1882 the noble Marquess was kind enough,

at his request, to move the Government of India to give Quartermasters serving with the rank of Captain in India the allowance of Captains; and he would now appeal to the noble Marquess not to allow a well-founded and well-ascertained grievance on the part of those most meritorious officers to remain unnoticed at this particular period. He would like to make one or two remarks with respect to the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, and he could not help expressing his regret that this was the last Report they would receive from that excellent officer Major General Bulwer. Whatever differences of opinion might exist, and whatever views they might take of long and short service, they could not fail to acknowledge the distinguished ability and impartiality which had always characterized his Reports. There was one portion of the Report in which he was happy to say all could agree—namely, that in which the Inspector General especially condemned the system of attenuated battalions, of which there were no fewer than 35 last year. He would not refer to this subject minutely, because the noble Marquess had said that these battalions were to be got rid of, and that battalions of 650 rank and file were to be established in their place. [The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Including depôts.] The Inspector General of Recruiting, in condemning those attenuated battalions, spoke of the way in which they were hampered in the performance of garrison duties; and those garrison duties were very important at the present time, for they could not, in these days of dynamite outrages, dispense, as they had hoped to do, with a certain number of sentries, and trust entirely to the police He found, in the Report, that not only did the Inspector General condemn attenuated battalions, but he condemned also the frequent change in the establishment of battalions; he wished that the establishment of battalions at home should be of more uniform strength, as in that case a supply of recruits would in time become annually more equal, and thus a certain proportion of the battalion would be composed of men fully trained and available for duty. In other words, the Inspector General thought, as he (General Alexander) did also, that there should not be a great variety of battalions, and that their present system was too complicated. He (General Alexander) thought, if they had one peace establishment and one war establishment, it would be sufficient Why should they not content themselves with a peace establishment of 750 rank and file, and a war establishment of 950 rank and file? The battalion of Grenadier Guards sent out the other day was a fine battalion, because it contained the pick of three battalions Therefore, he would take that opportunity of asking the noble Marquess to consider whether it would not be advisable to add at the present time another battalion to the Coldstream Guards, and another battalion to the Scots Guards, because he was satisfied that by doing so their efficiency would be greatly increased. He did not see why the battalions of the Guards, which, as an hon Gentleman pointed out the other day, went so frequently abroad, should not be increased in number, and why those three regiments should be of unequal strength He would also like to say a few words with regard to the new system of recruiting adopted in the Guards—that was to say, the three years' system established in June, 1883, and for which the Inspector General claimed that it had been a great success But it must be remembered that this experiment was tried under exceptional circumstances. They were told by the Inspector General that all the agencies of recruiting were set to work in every district, in order to obtain recruits for the Guards, and to make known throughout the country the great advantages of that service. But it appeared to him to be a little premature to say whether the system had or had not been a success, for they must remember that there still existed in the battalions of the Guards a considerable number of old soldiers, and a good deal would depend on the circumstance as to whether a considerable number of men enlisted under the three years' system were induced to prolong their service with the Colours He might inform the Committee that up to the 28th of February, 1,163 men had enlisted in the Grenadier Guards under the system of short service, and that out of that number exactly 173 men, or 14·84 per cent, had consented to prolong their service with the Colours That, the Committee would

admit, was not a very large number, and he was afraid that unless they obtained a greater number there would be some difficulty in obtaining a supply of good non-commissioned officers. With respect to the men, the numbers obtained were considered by the Inspector General to be exceedingly satisfactory. But what about the quality of the men; what did the General Officers of the district say in their Reports with respect to the quality of the recruits? There were 13 of these Reports, and only three of them were distinctly favourable, and they came from the Home District, from Scotland, and from Jersey. Jersey, he thought, they might leave altogether out of account, as coming from a not very important recruiting district. The general tenour of all the other Reports was that the recruits were a great deal too young, and that their appearance ought to show those who enlisted them that they were too young. The Inspector General (Major General Bulwer), when quoting the Reports, urged, with perfect truth, that provided time was given young men would ultimately become the best soldiers. But the question was would time be given? Time, no doubt, was a very important factor in the case. For instance, they heard a great deal the other day about the 3rd Battalion of the Rifle Brigade, that went out to Gibraltar with half its battalion consisting of boys, and more than 200 of them had not gone through any course of musketry. If time were given—if the Mahdi or the Russians would give them time—no doubt, that battalion would prove a very efficient battalion. He was glad to see that the Military Authorities were at last becoming alive to the circumstance that it was necessary to institute, at any rate, a partial return to the system of long service, because, instead of, as formerly, doing their very best to induce soldiers to enter the Reserve, they were now doing all they could to induce men to prolong their service to 12 years; nay, more, he was informed upon the very best authority that a man having served 12 years and wishing to prolong his service to 21 years, and thus get his pension, was scarcely ever refused. That was a very important point, and it was a most valuable testimony on the part of the Authorities to the advantages of long service.

General Alexander

SIR ARTHUR HAYTER said, he thought it might be convenient to the Committee that he should state what the views of the Department were with regard to the two classes of men the hon. Gentleman the Member for Colchester (Mr. Causton) had alluded to. First of all, as to Military Staff Clerks. He had made a very careful analysis of their pay, and he found that they received on appointment 3*s.* 6*d.* a-day, and they ranked with sergeants, who received only 2*s.* 8*d.* a-day. They then rose 6*d.* a-day every three years to 5*s.* a-day, and at each step they received a very considerably higher rate of pay than the sergeants with whom they ranked. For instance, the Colour Sergeants with whom they ranked after three years' service received 3*s.* a-day, and they received 4*s.* When they rose to the highest grade they were paid 5*s.* a-day, as against 4*s.* paid to Quartermaster Sergeants; therefore, with regard to pay, they received in all the ranks in which they served considerably more than the regimental men. Now as to pensions. They received 3*s.* 6*d.* a-day pension after 12 years' service, and 4*s.* 6*d.* a-day after 21 years' service, whilst the maximum amount of pension paid to a non-commissioned officer was 2*s.* 9*d.* It had been said that there was no opportunity for these men to rise in the Service; but he found that posts open to regimental sergeants were open to them, and that if they obtained Quartermasterships they received a Quartermaster's pay. The Department were, however, making some changes this year, which it was hoped would even improve the position of the men. Well, then, with regard to the Quartermasters. He was obliged to trouble the Committee with a few figures, because he had had to compare the present position of the Quartermasters with their position before the Warrant was issued in 1881. Now, the advantages they had received were these. Before the Warrant was issued a Quartermaster of Infantry received 8*s.* 2*d.* a-day, rising to a maximum after 32 years' service of 13*s.* 2*d.*; after the Warrant the Quartermaster received on appointment 9*s.* a-day, and after 20 years' service (commissioned) 15*s.*, rising by successive increments after five, 10, and 15 years' service. With regard to his pension. Before the Warrant a Quartermaster received 5*s.* 6*d.* a-day

after 15 years' service, and 10*s.* a-day after 30 years' service; he now received after 15 years' service £150 a-year, after 25 years £180 a-year, and after 30 years £200 a-year. As regarded pay and pension, therefore, the Quartermaster's position had been improved by the Warrant. He was also given by the Warrant after 10 years' service the honorary and relative rank of Captain, while formerly he did not obtain that rank until retirement—and the rank carried with it widow's pension and increased allowances. Something was said by his hon. Friend (Mr. Causton) with respect to promotion. Article 60 of the Warrant provided—

"A Quartermaster or Ridingmaster who may be recommended for promotion by our Commander-in-Chief, and who shall have passed such a professional examination as may be fixed from time to time by our Commander-in-Chief, with the approval of our Secretary of State, may be granted a commission as a lieutenant in our Cavalry or Infantry, provided he shall not exceed the age of 32 years."

And Article 7 provided—

"A Lieutenant shall be eligible for promotion to the rank of Captain after two years' service in our Army."

Of course, it might be said that very few accepted this promotion, or would be likely to. The reason, probably, was a financial one. The pay of a Lieutenant was only 5*s.* 3*d.* a-day, while that of a Quartermaster was 9*s.* a-day; and in addition to that, a Lieutenant, even if he rose to the rank of Captain, had to leave the Service at 40 years of age, but a Quartermaster was able to stay on full pay until he was 55 years of age. Well, then, something was said about the rank service. Rank service was reckoned for combatant officers, and for all officers appointed to Departments of the Army at half the service in the ranks (Article 425). Thus Paymasters had no advantage over Quartermasters. He heard that one of the grievances of the Quartermasters was that they received no increase beyond the maximum after 30 years' service; but neither did Lieutenant Colonels, Commissariat or Ordnance Store officers, or Surgeon Majors, or, he believed, any rank. If half the claims of the Quartermasters were granted, £40,000 a-year would be the charge—£80,000 for the whole. No doubt, Quartermasters did not now so frequently obtain Paymasterships; but that was in consequence of the change which, after very full consideration, was adopted by Mr Secretary Hardy. He (Sir Arthur Hayter) thought it would be a very bad step for them to raise the age for promotion, because in all probability they would fill the higher ranks of the Army with old men. Considering the immense expense which it would involve, and considering that the men whose case his hon. Friend (Mr. Causton) had taken up were in all respects better off than they were before the Warrant of 1881, it was not possible for his noble Friend (the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) to entertain the request which had been made.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he thought the hon. Member for Colchester (Mr. Causton) had done good service by bringing the case of the Quartermasters before the Committee, and he also thought that the clear way in which his hon. and gallant Friend (General Alexander) had stated the case of these men deserved somewhat more consideration at the hands of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) than it had received at the hands of the Financial Secretary to the War Office (Sir Arthur Hayter). He also agreed with his hon. and gallant Friend (General Alexander) that they were deeply indebted to General Bulwer for the Annual Statement he had made since he had occupied his present position; that Statement was clear and explicit, and gave them every detail and every information; and they would indeed be sorry to lose the services of General Bulwer, which had been of great advantage to the public. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) desired at that moment to call the attention of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) to the peculiar position in which they were now placed. They had had already presented the Supplementary Estimates for the Army, and they had now received the Army Estimates themselves; but these Army Estimates were not the Army Estimates which they would have to deal with presently. A very large increase was to be made in the Army, and the noble Marquess considered that the proper time to discuss this increase would be when the Vote of Credit was brought on. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) ventured to

say that no fair or proper discussion could be raised when they came to the Vote of Credit, because that Vote of Credit would be taken more upon political issues than upon military issues. The Vote of Credit would be debated, and debated most keenly, no doubt, from both sides of the House, and, in his opinion, very little of the real question—that was the increase of the Army—would enter into view, because all the many considerations connected with the occupation of Egypt would chiefly occupy the attention of hon. Members. He asked them, was it not fitter that some opportunity should be afforded for discussing the Estimates proper, because it would be quite impossible to discuss the Vote of Credit upon its merits? He also desired to remind the noble Marquess that when they came to discuss the Vote of Credit, it would not be the ordinary Members who usually took part in military discussions who would speak; it would not be those alone who, perhaps rightly or wrongly, thought they knew something about military matters; but the discussion would be carried on chiefly by all those hon. Members who were interested, on one side or the other, in the occupation of Egypt by an English Army; therefore, he thought he and his hon. Friends had some right, before the Vote was passed that night, to demand that they should have a proper opportunity of discussing in detail the proposals which the noble Marquess had to make. Now, there was one remark which the noble Marquess made which he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was exceedingly sorry to hear. The noble Marquess said they were only going to increase the Army simply on account of the present war in the Soudan. Now, there was no man who had had such an opportunity as the noble Marquess of knowing the exact position and condition of their Army; and, therefore, if the noble Marquess were to get up in his place and say that the position of their Army was satisfactory, or had been satisfactory during the time he had been in Office, he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would be very much astonished. The noble Marquess knew perfectly well that there was a great want of men to do duty in the Home Army. If there was one thing more patent than another it was the want of men of sufficient age to send out to the Army abroad, and that whenever they were occupied in any war, however small, they were completely put upon their beam ends, and were obliged to go to the utmost of their resources to fill up the Army abroad. He knew it would be said that they had a Reserve which they could always fall back upon; but he thought the Reserve had been very much damaged of late by being called upon to serve at times when it never expected to be called upon. The men had been taken away from Civil employment at home so frequently that those who willingly employed them at the outset, believing that they were not going to be employed abroad again, were often bound to refuse to re-engage them when the necessity for their employment was over. It was because he had felt so strongly on this point, and because he had always felt that the depletion of the regiments at home to send out efficient men to the regiments abroad had made their Army at home so inefficient, that he had always urged a considerable increase of the Army. That was a question which was raised when short service was introduced. It was never supposed for a moment that the Army was to remain as it was, but it was always understood there was to be an increase in the number of men. But they had a Government pledged to retrenchment, and the bottom of the whole mischief, both in regard to the Navy and the Army, and their foreign coaling stations, and their home defences, was that it was very difficult to get the money. It was because the Government did not like to raise the money that the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War was obliged to resort to the expedient of saying, with regard to the two latter questions, that when a proper and mature plan was presented the Government would be ready to take it into consideration. But, supposing they were attacked in the meantime, where would they be with their great Arsenals undefended, where would they be when their Fleet was engaged elsewhere? Their preparation at home was to be delayed until some maturity was arrived at. Of course, half a defence was better than no defence at all, and he hoped the noble Marquess was entertaining the matter more seriously than he had shown in his speech that night when he said the Government could not consider the

question until there was something more definite upon which they could act. Now, he would like for one moment to turn to what was an old Army Return, but, after all, the newest with the exception of the monthly. In the Army Return for last year very valuable information was given with regard to the waste that took place amongst the recruits. The waste was still great; it had not stopped, though at some times it was considerably less than at others. In the years 1881-2-3, he found there were no less than 83,156 recruits enlisted, and that the total falling off or waste in those years was 15,579, leaving only 67,577; therefore, that confirmed what his right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Stanley) said—that they had not yet found any means of stopping the waste in the Army. He was glad to find that this year 35,653 recruits had joined the Service; but he would like to know how many of those men were still in the Service; how many had left? He remembered very well the occasion on which the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Wolseley), who was now commanding so well out in the Soudan, boasted that they had enlisted upwards of 33,000 men in the year; but it must be borne in mind that at the very moment the noble Lord was speaking between 3,000 and 4,000 of those recruits had wasted away and were not to be found. There was no doubt that this year there had simply been a repetition of the past, and it would be for the noble Marquess to see if he could not find out some means by which men might be prevented from leaving the Service. Surely there ought to be some means of preventing the great waste which now went on. As a general rule, if recruits got over the first six or eight months they continued in the Service, and made most excellent soldiers; it was the first six or eight months of service that broke them down and cooled their zeal for Her Majesty's Army. In regard to stoppages, there was great room for improvement; free rations, too, might be given. Of course, with regard to the kit, it was impossible to give everything that was asked; but more might be done in that direction than had been done hitherto, and at no very great cost. When they took a recruit and worked him as he was now worked, when they forced him into a position for which he was unfit, when they put him on sentry and to do duty before he was really half-drilled, the man found he was in a position he did not expect to be in. Men were forced on at an unreasonable rate because there was a scarcity of men in the regiments; and, therefore, it was a satisfaction to hear what the noble Marquess said the other day—though he was rather inclined to go back from his statement to-day—that there was to be a considerable increase in the depôts. How was it that the Guards and Rifles and Marines were in such a good position? It was because the men, at the outset, were properly drilled, and were not sent away to go upon duty until they were fit to be put in the ranks. Was that so with Line regiments? Could it be expected that the discipline of a regiment would be perfect if men were sent to join them before they were properly drilled? He noticed that the desertions had been 4,478—rather more than they were last year; but into that question he did not propose at that moment to go. There was, however, one question which he was in hopes might have been touched upon that night—namely, the increase of the regiments serving abroad and those first for duty at home, and the depôts of those regiments which had both the battalions abroad. Into that question, too, he would not go further, except to say that he did hope that a substantial increase in the Army would be made, because it was impossible, without such an increase, for the duty of the Army in their garrison towns and elsewhere to be carried on, except under great privations to the men who had to perform it. An increase of the Army was not alone required for warlike purposes, but simply to insure the proper protection of the nation. With all their interests, not only at home but abroad, and considering the vast amount of money which the country was called upon to expend, no reasonable man could admit that their Army was in a proper and fit condition. He had a few words to say about the Cavalry, because he could only compare the proposed increase in that branch of the Service to a drop in the ocean. He was speaking in the presence of a most distinguished Cavalry General (Lieutenant General Sir Frederick Fitz-Wygram), and if he therefore said anything which was not absolutely correct, that hon. and gallant Gentleman would, he was

sure, correct him. He knew that he and his hon. and gallant Friend did not agree on all military questions; but as to the necessity of keeping up the most efficient Cavalry Force they certainly were agreed. There was a most remarkable statement made the other day in the papers by an hon. and gallant Gentleman of 30 years' service. He did not know whether the attention of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) had been directed to that statement. Looking at the use of Cavalry in the present day, looking at the number of Cavalry they had at home, if there was one thing they ought to be more particular about than another it was that their Cavalry regiments should be efficient. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War could not possibly say that it was a wise or prudent thing to pick all the best men out of the Cavalry regiments and send them, as they had been sent recently, to the Soudan to form Lord Wolseley's Camel Corps; such a thing could not possibly contribute to the efficiency of the Cavalry regiments left behind. Whenever it suited the convenience of right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Bench, they were apt to say they liked to imitate what was done abroad. Let them, however, follow the foreign Armies with regard to their Cavalry and with regard to their Artillery. The Cavalry regiments in foreign Armies were always kept up to war strength, and our regiments ought always to be kept up to that strength. They were constantly reading in the papers of some new organization being required for the Cavalry. Now, if there was one thing more mischievous than another it would be to make the organization of the Infantry applicable to the Cavalry; for this country a Cavalry regiment must be complete in itself. It ought to be of such a strength that it could easily be increased when sent abroad, and it ought always to be 600 strong. Let them see how the regiments stood at that moment. He noticed that there were 10 regiments stationed in Great Britain from October 15, 1883, to October 14, 1884, and their establishments, if complete, were eight regiments of 469, and two regiments of 600, making an aggregate of 4,952. Now, in this one year, looking to the various losses from all causes, without particularizing such losses, they amounted to the very large number of 1,745. He admitted that 430 were sent out to form the Camel Corps in the Soudan; but they were lost to the establishments at home, and could not be considered to add to the efficiency of the Home regiments. When it was borne in mind what heavy work that of a Cavalry regiment was, what fatigue duties the men had to perform, what guards the men had to do, it was unwise that the regiments should be burdened with young and untrained soldiers. It would be well if the noble Marquess were to inspect the Cavalry regiments, for then he would see in what an inefficient state they were. Why, there was one Cavalry regiment of 469 men who, within the past 18 months, had received 255 recruits; another regiment within the same period had received 244 recruits, and a third 252 recruits. He would take two regiments with regard to which the noble Marquess had spoken as having sent two squadrons of each with the Force sent to Suakin under Sir Gerald Graham. The Hussar regiment which was first for duty, which consisted of 600 men, had sent two squadrons to the Soudan, and yet it had received 310 recruits during the past 18 months. The 5th Lancers, which were on a lower establishment, had received 254 recruits during the past 18 months, and had sent two squadrons to the Soudan. Now, he would put it to the noble Marquess whether it was possible that recruits could do their duty under such circumstances as those? He saw his hon. Friend the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Brand) smile at that statement. He should like to see the hon. Gentleman himself do the duty of one of those men—just for a week. If the hon. Gentleman knew anything of the circumstances, he would know what hard work those men had to do. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) would go the length of saying that at the present time if there was one arm of the Service which ought not to be neglected it was the Cavalry. There was one other matter which the noble Marquess had said little or nothing about—that was the question of Mounted Infantry. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was glad that the Mounted Infantry had not been turned into Cavalry regiments. He was convinced that the best men they could find in the Infantry regiments,

given proper opportunities for instruction, and whose officers were encouraged to learn their duties, were the best men who could be found for a certain class of service. They ought to have every opportunity for becoming proficient, and facilities ought to be given at Aldershot and elsewhere. He would ask the noble Marquess whether he had turned his attention in that direction, and whether he had done anything to help, establish, and foster the idea that that branch of the Service was one which required development? The point was one which would commend itself to everyone interested in the Service. And now just one word with regard to the Reserves. He admitted, and admitted freely, that the Reserve stood far better than it had ever done—that was to say, they had 39,244 men in the First Class Army Reserve, and he supposed they had something like 30,813 in the Militia Reserve, making a total of 70,057. The noble Marquess had kept in the Army a certain number of men who should have passed into the Reserve, and he had also asked for volunteers from the Reserve. He thought that was a wise course to take in both those cases; but he should like to know how many men had volunteered from the Reserve to serve again in the Army? When the noble Marquess replied, perhaps he would be able to tell them, because it would be interesting to know how many men had volunteered since the order was first given.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have told the hon. and gallant Member how many men there were up to the 1st of January.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: The noble Marquess gave us so many figures that I could not understand from his speech how many men there were. No doubt, he gave us a figure——

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I said that 1,400 men had volunteered up to the 1st of January.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT: The noble Marquess said 1,400. Well, he was very glad to think that that number had volunteered; but he would like to ask the noble Marquess whether he considered 1,400 volunteers, out of 39,000 men, was satisfactory—whether he thought it satisfactory that only 1,400 men should volunteer from the Reserve at such a time of emergency as the present? The country asked the Reserves to volunteer, and only 1,400 responded to the call.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I say up to the 1st of January; I do not know how many have volunteered since.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that if the noble Marquess declared that he did not know how many volunteered since the 1st of January, he would say nothing further about it except to continue in this way, that why he had urged so strongly an increase to the Army itself, and why he should always continue to do so, was because he thought that when emergencies arose, unless they were very great ones, they had no right to trench upon the Reserves. The Reserves were all they would have to depend upon in the case of the greatest emergency, and if they used them up on the first blush in all these small wars, where would they be when they had to face some great European complication? Why, they would then have nothing to fall back upon; and he ventured to say that by relying upon the Reserves as they were now doing a great mischief was done to that arm of the Service itself. When the Reserves were taken out for occasions that were not of the first magnitude, civilians would cease employing them in proportion as they knew their services were not to be relied upon for any length of time. Ordinary employers of labour would have nothing to do with these men when they knew they were liable to be taken for service in the Army on the smallest provocation, and when it was known also that there were plenty of means of increasing the Army in other ways. The men themselves must be dissatisfied, seeing that when they enlisted it was on the understanding that they should not be called out as Reserves except in case of a great National emergency. No doubt, it might be argued that a great emergency now existed; but the other wars into which they had entered were not cases of such emergency, therefore he urged, and urged most strongly, that the case of the Reserves was a peculiar one, and one that did deserve far more consideration than what had yet been given to it. Look at the cost of increasing the Army. The cost to this country of the Army itself was not to be measured by the number of pounds,

shillings, and pence that was paid for it. Their Army was a voluntary one—look at the class of men they got into it. It was the making of many of them taking them into the Army. A very large proportion of them would have done nothing else if they had not enlisted; and yet even many of those who had been the very worst, when they got into civil life after their service in the Army, proved to be most valuable servants to those who engaged them. If they looked abroad they would see that the men in the Army were taken from various occupations—many of them were skilled artizans who earned large sums of money for their country. Many of the men serving in Continental Armies had been capable, before enrolment, of earning eight or 10 francs a-day, whereas their pay when in the Army was only one franc a-day. Could they compare the case of those countries with that of England? Certainly England was in the best position she possibly could be in in that respect. They were giving employment to men who probably would not otherwise be employed, and at the same time saving the nation from using higher skilled labour which could be turned to better account than employing it in the Army. He had only one word more to say, and that was with regard to a Force with which he had had a great deal to do—namely, the Volunteers. He was sorry to hear that the noble Marquess, though he was going to do something, was not going to do as much as he thought the circumstances of the case required. They might depend upon it, it was a most desirable thing to encourage the Volunteers to go into camp; and to his mind it would be most advantageous to set aside a certain amount of camp equipment for the men. All the expense that it cost the battalions when they got into camp should be paid for them. If they wanted that Force to be efficient and well-disciplined, that was the way to bring that desirable state of things about. The Volunteers were becoming a highly valuable Force to the country, and the more the Authorities tried to instil into them the principles of discipline, so much the more would they be of use to the nation. He would, in conclusion, say they would have an opportunity later on of talking about the two Army Corps, which he hoped the noble Marquess would tell them were to have all their transport and commissariat, and all that which was so essential in warfare, attached to them. Up to the present the arrangement of those Army Corps in that respect—namely, with regard to commissariat and transport, had entirely failed. He hoped the noble Marquess would be able to say that those Army Corps were to be completed in every sense and in every way. One more word. He, for one, was rejoiced to find that their Colonies had shown such a determination to come to the succour of the Mother Country. He only hoped that the Mother Country would extend to them that good feeling, and that friendly hand which at first he was afraid they had given grudgingly, because he believed the safety and security of the Empire depended upon their being a united people.

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON said, that that was the time to discuss questions connected with the financial part of these Estimates, because the future occasion for the discussion of Army matters promised by the noble Marquess would be occupied by very different matter. If the Committee was to have any control whatever over these large Estimates, now was the time to go into them. He must thank the noble Marquess for having framed the Estimates this year with the addition he had asked for last Session, by separating the Supplementary Estimates from the original Estimates of the year. In that way the Committee was able to see at a glance the increase which they made in the normal Estimate of the year. But there was one thing he had suggested which had not been done. He had asked that the estimated increase and decrease should be made on the current Estimate each year, with the original Estimate of the past year; not on the original Estimate of one year, with total Estimate, original and supplementary, of the past year, because it was impossible to form a fair Estimate in that way. He would like to give an illustration of what he meant. In this year's Estimate they had an increase on the Establishment of £722,000, and parallel to it were the decreases upon last year's Estimates amounting to £732,000. Those amounts nearly balanced themselves, and no great damage appeared to be done; but if the Estimates

were prepared in the way he asked, showing the real increase of the Estimate now asked for, and the real Estimate asked for that time last year, a very different state of things would be found to exist. He did not understand why the Committee should not have placed before it, in clear figures, the increase they were asked to vote, that they might know year by year the increase that was made in the Estimates. As the Estimates were now framed they saw in large figures a net decrease of £84,900, whereas in reality there was an increase of £1,890,100. He was aware that the matter was explained at the end below the big figures; but it did not catch the eye, and they were flattering themselves that they were voting a decreased sum this year, when really they were voting an increase, and in that way the Army Estimates mounted up year by year to a very large sum; the Estimates of the country were increasing £1,000,000 a-year steadily. During the last 10 years they had increased at that rate, the increase having been for that period £10,000,000 by this system of preparing the Estimates. His contention was that they did not know what they were doing, and, therefore, as the noble Marquess had complied with half his request, he would strongly urge him now to comply with the other half. The plan he proposed would make the plan very simple, and would not cause any official inconvenience. Beyond that he wished to draw attention to one point, and to one point only. It was a matter to which he had drawn attention last year on these Estimates. It was with regard to the great falling off of the Militia of the country. He forgot the exact case he quoted last year, but the falling off had been very large, especially in regard to the officers; but he would draw attention to the matter as it stood this year. There were of officers enrolled now 2,777, whereas in 1883, or two years ago, there were 3,290 enrolled. That was to say, the country had 513 Militia officers fewer this year than she had two years ago. Then, if they took the number of officers in training they would find that though the number of the Establishment was 3,579, there were only 2,347 at training, or a difference of 1,232. Out of the number enrolled, small as it was compared with what it was two years ago, no less than 395 were absent on leave. He could not think there was any energy in the Service and any real desire on the part of officers to do their duty when they saw such a large number of officers on leave of absence and away from training. Then, with regard to privates, he found the Establishment was 121,000 odd privates—the figures were so small in the Estimates that it was almost impossible to read them, and he was not sure, therefore, that he was quoting correctly. Last year the number was 122,629, showing a difference of nearly 1,000 less this year on the Establishment than last. How it was that the Militia had been reduced in that way he did not know; but, as a matter of fact, the number required to complete the Establishment were 2,000 more this year than they were last. The noble Marquess told him last year that he had taken steps to deal with this matter, and hoped that the Militia would rally, and that they would find that the difficulty under which they were suffering would be removed, and that additional Militia would be added to the Establishment. He (Sir Alexander Gordon) was sorry to say, however, that if these figures were correct—and he had no reason to doubt them—the depletion of the Militia was going on very rapidly. With regard to the Adjutant General's Return, dealing with recruiting in the Army, he was struck by the reference to the large number of men who obtained their discharge by purchase before the expiration of three months' service. Some hon. Members would remember that the clause bearing upon this matter was inserted in the Act of 1881 for the first time. Instead of a recruit being able to pay £1, he thought it was, of "smart money" within 24 or 48 hours of enlistment, that privilege was taken away, and it was enacted that a man had first to be enlisted, was to be attested immediately on the same day, and to have no chance of escape unless he paid £10. According to communications received from officers in the recruiting service, it was clear that large numbers of men tried to get off, but were unable to obtain the money. On page 22 of the Report it would be found that no less than £76,490 had been paid into the Exchequer by poor lads who had enlisted in order to get out of the Service, into which they had been inveigled, within three months of their taking the shilling. That seemed

to him to be a great hardship. Another point was with regard to recruiting officers being allowed to act as magistrates and swearing in the recruits. That system had been forbidden up to 1881, and it was only then that these officers were allowed to act in the capacity of Justices of the Peace for the purpose of administering the oath. The recruit was made in the street and taken into the barracks; the commanding officer swore him in at once, and the man was fixed, and unable to get off without paying £10. He had protested against that system when the clause was put into the Act, and he was sure that all officers who had ever had anything to do with the recruiting service knew how unjust it was. In 1880, 1,400 men purchased their discharge; in 1881, 1,400; in 1883, 1,500; and last year, 1,751. The number of young men who acted in this way seemed to be increasing, and that, as hon. Members would see, did not tend to make the Service more popular. For the Service to be popular young men should enter it and remain in it willingly. At present it was evident that a great number of men were unwilling. He thought this matter was worthy the attention of the noble Marquess. The system seemed to be one of forcing young lads to take the shilling, and them compelling them, by the alternative of this £10 fine, to remain in the Service.

Lord ALGERNON PERCY said, that after listening to the speech of the noble Marquess, it was impossible not to lament that the Statement made by the Minister for War differed very materially from the opinion of all officers who were at present serving in the Army, and from all those who had any knowledge on the subject. Indeed, he believed that it also differed very much from the real opinion of Her Majesty's Ministers themselves. They were invariably told that the Army was in a most efficient condition, and that they were capable of despatching a large Force at a moment's notice to any part of the Empire, and were able to meet any emergency that might arise; whereas it was perfectly well known that the real facts of the case were very different. The noble Marquess had prided himself a good deal upon the fact of the despatch of a Force to Egypt the other day without any delay, and he thought the noble Marquess said without any dislocation of the Service. Well, he (Lord Algernon Percy) would deal with that subject in a few minutes. He believed that, although there was no delay, the dislocation in the Service was very considerable, and he could not help feeling that it was rather a pity that Ministers for the time being did not meet the case boldly and state what they really knew to be the fact—namely, that the Service required a great deal to be done to it in order to render it efficient, because he was convinced that the House and the country would be willing to vote any sum that was absolutely required to bring about that efficiency. As it was, the country was paying a large sum of money for the Army, and was not really getting the article it ought to possess. They were told that a certain number of regiments were to be so many strong—were to be increased to 650 strong, and certainly the officers in the Army had thought that that would be a great improvement; but their joy was at once damped when they learned that the number was to include the depôts. That made a great difference, and made the increase to the regiments very small indeed. People who knew very little about these matters—probably the House generally—would think, when they heard of a regiment being 650 strong, that it implied that the regiment contained that number of fighting men; but such was not the fact. He would undertake to say that if the noble Marquess were to take the trouble to go down and attend a parade unexpectedly—because if his coming were known an effort would be made to get together a large number of men, and a great many who under other circumstances would be employed in other duties would be brought to parade—he would find a regiment of, perhaps, 600 strong, parading 100, or not 150 men. He would find that at least half the men were recruits, who had lately learnt their drill, and not one of whom had ever fired a shot out of a rifle, and the remainder would be composed of men on garrison fatigue, on duty as orderlies or cooks, or in the other casual duty that had to be performed in every regiment. The few men left on duty would be old soldiers who were feeling extremely dissatisfied with the amount of extra work thrown upon them. The recruits of which such a large number would be

found, would be men incapable of doing a great many things that old soldiers had to do, such as guard duty. A letter which had been written by General Fraser to *The Morning Post* on the 10th of this month, had been referred to. That officer had pointed out that many of the Cavalry regiments had had half their number recruited within the last 18 months. That was the case also with regard to Line regiments. It was impossible to describe regiments so incomplete and so unfinished as efficient. They were not efficient at all, and certainly were not prepared for any service that might be required of them. With regard to the question of fatigues, he must submit it would be a good thing if a system could be arrived at by which fatigue duty could be lightened. At all quarters and camps throughout the Kingdom, the amount of Government fatigues, as they were called, was very large indeed. All the work of the different stores was performed by privates who were taken out of the camp when they ought to be employed in drill. The period of service was short enough, Heaven knew, and it ought not to be wasted in this manner, but should be employed in teaching the men their duty as soldiers; it should not be frittered away by this fatigue duty, gymnastics, and every sort of work except that of learning the duty of a soldier. On this matter he was not speaking from his own experience solely, but he was fortified in the opinion he was expressing by such an eminent and distinguished officer as General Fraser. The fact was, that the more the present system was tried the more it was proved to have failed. The noble Marquess had expressed the opinion that the Guards' system of enlistment had worked admirably. The noble Marquess prided himself upon its success; but the fact was that that system tended rather towards long service than anything else, and certainly not towards short service, for the idea was that a man would re-engage for nine years. Their system was copied from Germany; but the reformers of the Army, when they adopted it, seemed to have entirely forgotten two very important circumstances, one being that the German Army never left its native shores, and the other being that in Germany they had compulsory service, whereas in England they had to find troops to serve in every quarter of the globe, and their service was voluntary. He thought there could be no greater proof of the failure of their system than the circumstances attaching to the despatch of troops to Egypt and South Africa this year. In order to equip Lord Wolseley's Force every single Cavalry regiment in the Service had been injured, irremediably injured. From every Cavalry regiment a great number of the best men had been taken to make up the number required, and everybody knew that to take a large number of well-trained soldiers out of a Cavalry regiment damaged that regiment for a very considerable space of time. Then the noble Marquess had said that no volunteering had been necessary to fill up the regiments that had been sent out. No doubt, that was perfectly true; but then they must not lose sight of the fact that there had been considerable drafting, and that in order to send out the Guards battalions, other regiments had been obliged to give a number of their best men. When it became necessary for them to put a large Force in the field, as in the case of the campaign in the Soudan—and after all a little over 20,000 men was not a very large Force for the English Army to put in the field—they had the pleasure of knowing that the Army at home was in an utterly disorganized condition. With regard to the Forces in South Africa, they were actually employing civilians to take part in the war, and he regarded it as a most extraordinary circumstance that a country like England with a large standing Army should be compelled to have recourse to civilians for the purpose of placing so small a Force in the field. He was not going on his own judgment alone as to the failure of the present system, because he found that at the anniversary meeting of the Royal United Service Institution on February 28, the subject of the essay for the prize was—"Can the European Army in India remain as at present constituted, or should it be in whole or in part a local force?" There were 16 essays submitted, and every one of them expressed a decided opinion that short service as enforced in their Army was inapplicable to the Forces in India, and that it was impossible to maintain in India an Army that could take the field

under the present system. If there were two things which militated against the efficiency and popularity of the Service at the present moment, it was the constant changes among the men in the battalions and the constant stoppages, to which allusion had been made. General Fraser, speaking of the great unrest there was in the Service, had pointed out that of 278 men discharged by purchase 175 had less than three months' service, and that in the case of one regiment, out of 169 men, enlisted from November, 1883, to November, 1884, 75 men had in that time left the regiment. It was impossible that a regiment could have any solidarity about it under these circumstances of change. Again, with regard to stoppages, there was no doubt that a recruit from the moment of engagement to the moment of leaving the Service considered himself to be fraudulently treated in this respect. He was promised that he should have a free kit. Well, he had a free kit, but he was told that it was to last him longer than it was possible for a kit to last any man; he had to replace the articles when worn out, and the whole of the articles had to be kept in order at his expense. And, again, although his clothing was worn out in the performance of his duties, he was made to put it in order at his own expense. He (Lord Algernon Percy) thought it would be well that a certain number of canvass working suits should be kept in barracks and served out to the men, and that the repairs in these suits should be made good and paid for by the regiment in the same way as other barrack damages were paid. He believed that such an arrangement would be exceedingly popular with the men. Then with regard to orderly duties, which took so many men out of the ranks, he thought it would be a popular thing if the men after serving with the Colours could join some orderly corps to perform the duties of orderlies in garrison towns, and also do the orderly work at the Public Offices. The hon. and gallant Member (Sir Alexander Gordon) had made some remarks with regard to the absence of officers from the Militia training. He (Lord Algernon Percy) took objection to the remark of the hon. and gallant Member that those officers did not take a keen interest in their duties. The fact was that the time of training often clashed with the time of examinations, so that if an officer wanted to read up for an examination he could not do so and train with the Militia as well. He thought the officers might be allowed to train with other regiments, or that some relief might be given to them under the circumstances he had mentioned. There was no doubt the Militia was going down in a certain sense; but that was due to the fact of its being made the means of feeding the Army. He would not detain the Committee at any greater length than to say that these matters might be treated and remedied by Her Majesty's Government without expense to the country.

COLONEL COLTHURST said, that remedies had been attempted for some of the evils which existed in the Service by enabling a certain number of soldiers to be re-engaged. But those remedies had not been successful, and it was the duty of that House to find out and remove the cause. He believed the cause was mainly to be found in the system of deferred pay. Under the existing system the deferred pay was given to the man when he left the Army, but if he re-engaged it was not given to him before the final termination of his service; and he (Colonel Colthurst) was therefore of opinion that the £10 under such circumstances was too great an inducement for him to leave the Service. He thought that if the system of deferred pay was to be retained, the money should be given to the man whether he re-engaged or not. But, in his opinion, the far better way would be to do away with the stoppages of 3½*d.* a-day for groceries. The men were told that they were to have free rations; but the ration was not sufficient, and they had to pay from 3*d.* to 3½*d.* a-day to make it so. He thought the noble Marquess should consider whether it would not be a good thing to do away with the stoppages and give a man 1*s.* a-day with his food and no deferred pay at all. It was an extraordinary thing that with the inducements given of late to re-engage, and with the privilege which the noble Marquess had also given to Reserve men of coming back, so few of them should return to the ranks; 1,400 was a very small proportion of those who might

have been expected to return. He was unable to understand that except on the ground of the constant changes made during the last few years, under which the minds of the men had become quite puzzled and disheartened; when the privilege of re-engagement was taken away the men regretted it, but when it was given back to them they would not take advantage of it. There seemed to be some discontent at the bottom of this; and he thought that the facts mentioned by the noble Lord (Lord Algernon Percy), and the fact that the older men in the regiment did more work than they were accustomed to formerly, on account of the recruits, were the cause of it. With regard to orderlies, he thought it would be well if those employed in Public Offices and in garrison towns were taken out of an orderly corps. There was at the present time a great need of soldiers, and he thought the soldiers they had might be left to do their duties as soldiers without engaging them in other occupations. He hoped the noble Marquess would take those points into consideration, which, although they might appear small in themselves, were of very great importance in connection with the popularity of the Service.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER said, he agreed with much that had fallen from his hon. and gallant Friend opposite (Colonel Colthurst), and with regard to deferred pay on which he had remarked, he was entirely in accord with him. The deferred pay had been, in his opinion, and in the opinion of old soldiers, a very great mistake. He would like to bring before the notice of the Committee another matter which he knew would be met with some opposition from the Benches opposite. He referred to the Order from the Horse Guards, dated 24th January, 1885, to the effect that after the 30th of June next gratuities given in connection with medals for long service and good service would cease. He had given Notice to his hon. Friend the Financial Secretary to the War Office (Sir Arthur Hayter) that he would bring forward this question. The present was a time when they must not play fast-and-loose with good and gallant soldiers. Their Army was a volunteer Army, and they wanted to get men to re-engage. He sincerely thanked the noble Marquess for what he had done in the matter of allowing soldiers to re-engage; but was that a time for the issue of an Order such as that to which he had referred, which could not but operate in a very opposite direction—that was to say, against the re-engagement of soldiers? For his own part, he regarded it as a breach of faith with the men that soldiers who had enlisted on previous conditions should now be told that after the 30th of June next they should not have the £5 gratuity given to them at the end of their period of service. He knew the feeling of the old soldiers in the Army, and their views of the Service; he worked for them as much as he could, and he could not but believe that it was detrimental to the interests of the Service that that Order should have been issued which deprived them of their gratuity. He had taken the trouble to work out the number of medals distributed last year, and he found from the 1st of April, 1884, to the 1st of January, 1885, there were 880 medals distributed amongst the old soldiers in Her Majesty's Service, and that with those 880 medals was granted altogether the sum of £4,880 by way of gratuity. He asked whether it was wise, with the Army in a transition state, for the sake of £4,880 to create discontent amongst old soldiers who had enlisted on the understanding that they should have this gratuity with their medal? He would not, on that occasion, dwell longer on that point; but he hoped the noble Marquess would take the matter into consideration with a view, if possible, to the withdrawal of the Order in question. While thanking the noble Marquess for what he had done, he was obliged to take exception to one or two remarks which fell from him with regard to the state of the Guards regiment sent to Egypt. The noble Marquess said they had not been obliged to call for volunteers. But, although that was the case, he (Sir Henry Fletcher) pointed out that in consequence they had decimated the regiments at home. He thought it right that the whole system should be clearly understood at the present time. He was informed that one of the battalions of Guards which went out the other day to Egypt—the Scots Guards—had to be provided with 10 sergeants and 350 men from the battalion left at home to make up its complement on proceeding to Egypt. The conse-

quence was that the one battalion left at home, and which was at that moment in London, was almost exhausted owing to the duties it had to perform. Those were matters which he thought the Military Authorities should look into. He was opposed to, and should always be opposed to, the territorial system, which he believed to be entirely wrong. He had read the Report of the Inspector General of Recruiting, and from his own knowledge of the state of affairs throughout the country he was unable to agree with that Report. However, he would impress most forcibly upon the Military Authorities that they should consider very carefully how the regiments which had two battalions abroad should be best provided for. There were 15 regiments abroad of two battalions, and that was a point of great importance. He thought that before the Committee voted this large sum of money they ought carefully to consider whether the territorial system was a success, and whether they would be able to keep up the supply of men to the regiments which were abroad.

CAPTAIN MAXWELL-HERON said, that although at the present moment, as military men, they had reason to criticize the Army system, they were none the less able to appreciate and express admiration of the great deeds and valour of their men in Egypt. No doubt, the great question at issue was as to recruiting; and he thought that while the pay of the soldier was only 1*s.* a-day, they could not expect to get the same article, so to speak, as they did 30 years ago, when the price of labour was cheaper. But he was glad to see, by the Report of the Inspector General, that recruiting had improved; and not only that, but that desertion was less than it was four years ago. During the Crimean War the 10 years' system came into operation. In 1854 he had the honour of commanding a company when some troops had to take their discharge. Speaking to the soldiers, whom he found to be very reasonable men, as a friend, he asked them whether they thought that in the next 10 or 11 years, by leaving the Army, they would be able, out of the wages earned by the practice of their calling, to save enough of money to give them a pension of 1*s.* or 1*s.* 2*d.* a-day. He believed that on that occasion, with the exception of three, not a single man took his discharge—a fact which he thought very creditable to the men. But the real question was the difficulty of providing troops for India. He had always held that they should revert to the local system in India, because he was sure that the time occupied in crossing the seas and bringing home invalided men was the cause of a great deal of loss in respect of soldier labour. He was sure it would come to it in time, and that was a question which he believed operated in the mind of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer when on a former occasion he mentioned the subject of pensions to him. They had discussed that evening the whole system of military administration, and the hon. and gallant Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had brought some important points under their consideration. He had always considered it their duty, as military men, to place military matters outside politics. Therefore he said he did not consider that the administration of affairs in the Army was as good as it might be, although he did not attribute that to anything which the noble Marquess had done. On the contrary, he had certainly made the system of extended service with the Colours more elastic; and if hon. Members wished to ascertain how that system had worked they had only to refer to the Inspector General's Report. They would find that when the system was made more elastic, and the noble Marquess offered £10 to men serving in India to re-engage with the Colours, not one single man re-engaged of under three years' service, a fact which proved that for the first three years a soldier's life was irksome and tedious to him, because he was made a soldier only after three years' service, and in the meantime he was, in a manner of speaking, bullied and kicked about, and was therefore, at the end of the short-service period, only too ready to take his discharge. Again, as the number of years of service increased, so the number of discharges decreased; and therefore he thought that if they could engage men to serve 21 years, they would confer a great boon both upon the Service and the country in general. The great difficulty now was to have a good line of attack and a good Reserve; but he trusted that they would never have to resort as they did during the Crimean War to the

humiliating and miserable expedient of paying mercenaries to fight the battles of the country. He was convinced that the present state of things abroad had been good for the Service, inasmuch as it had awakened many to the fact that neither the Army nor the Navy was in that state of efficiency in which they would like to see it. He hoped before another year had passed the Service would be improved, and that a considerable improvement would take place before their soldiers were again called upon to exhibit their courage and valour in the field.

COLONEL MILNE-HOME said, he should not have addressed the Committee but for one point raised by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Horsham (Sir Henry Fletcher) with reference to the proposed abolition of the gratuities accompanying medals for long service and good conduct. As a matter of fact, in the Household Cavalry, in which he had the honour of serving a long time, long service still prevailed. The consequence was that a large number of those medals had to be given away in the corps; and he knew of no prouder or pleasanter moment than when commanding officers had to call from the ranks men who had served during 18 years with uninterrupted good character for the purpose of bestowing upon them the medals in question. It was a very easy thing to lose character in a regiment, where temptations were so rife, and he repeated that it was a pleasant thing to award medals to men who had withstood those temptations and retained their character. Therefore, he felt it his duty to protest against the abolition of the gratuities which accompanied the long-service medals; and, in speaking on that subject, he would like the Committee to consider the kind of Circular which abolished them. It said—

"Until the 30th of June, 1884, a gratuity shall be paid to each soldier awarded a medal,"

and so on. Why, anyone would infer from the ingenious and ingenuous way in which the Circular was worded that something was to be granted to the soldiers until that date, whereas, as a matter of fact, something was to be taken away from them. It so happened that for the last nine years gratuities had been granted with good service medals, and that previous to that time there were only four such medals given away in each regiment. He repeated that this Article, instead of giving the soldier anything, absolutely deprived him of what he was entitled to. An hon. and gallant Friend of his had said it was a breach of faith. Surely common sense showed it was a breach of faith to all the men who joined the Service before the Circular was issued. The Circular was issued in 1881; it was repeated in 1882; and repeated again in January last; so that all the men who joined the Service before 1881 felt they would receive a gratuity of £5. Now, however, they were to be done out of it. Why were they to be done out of it? Was it because on Vote 17 it was hoped to save something like £3,000? In his opinion, £3,000 would be very well spent in the shape of these gratuities, because the very best recruiting agency they could have in the country were the men who left the Army, and who went back to their homes, and told their friends and companions how well they had been treated. Now, if men were sent down to the country who had been done out of this £5—he used the phrase advisably—recruiting would be very much checked, because they would tell their friends how, when they entered the Service, they were promised £5 one day, and how it was taken away from them the next. He had intended to say a word or two with reference to the condition of the Cavalry of the country; but the subject had been so thoroughly well dealt with by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), that he would not detain the Committee more than a single moment on the subject. General Fraser's letter had been referred to. That letter was, in his opinion, a most valuable production, because it put the facts of the case in the briefest and terseest manner, and it ought to be added to the Annals of the House. Every Member of the House of Commons ought to make it a part of his duty to ascertain what the real facts were with regard to the Cavalry Force of the country. There was one point to which his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) did not allude, and that was with reference to an Hussar regiment which had been sent abroad. The hon. and gallant Member said that the regiment had something like 300 recruits in

had made under the difficulties of their service. Very much lower [illegible] had been laid down in Cavalry [illegible] Cavalry regiments against the [illegible] service system that [illegible] ments; yet it was made [illegible] train a Cavalry soldier [illegible] soldier in addition [illegible] the training of the horses [illegible] interests [illegible] that, he was [illegible] purposes [illegible] Cavalry regiments [illegible] not really [illegible] ment of Cavalry regiments [illegible] were six regiments [illegible] horses, and [illegible] horses. What he was [illegible] done was an extra squadron [illegible] each of these regiments [illegible] squadron [illegible] of 50 horses [illegible] have regiments of [illegible] horses in the higher standard [illegible] ments of [illegible] lower standard. He [illegible] asked why he [illegible] were a great [illegible] considered that [illegible] regiments [illegible] was quite [illegible] part of a Cavalry [illegible] men. [illegible] speaking [illegible] men. He [illegible] country [illegible] age [illegible] trade [illegible] with [illegible] quired [illegible] carriers [illegible] trained Cavalry [illegible] he urged [illegible] keeping up the [illegible] largely [illegible] idea of the [illegible] of the [illegible] more than [illegible] large of horses [illegible] tion of the large [illegible] he hoped [illegible] would [illegible] settled [illegible] that [illegible] horses [illegible] Cavalry [illegible] [illegible] necessary [illegible]

distance; but they might be camped out even in the barrack yard. Every soldier, he thought, should be camped out once a-year, whether he belonged to Cavalry or Infantry, because it was well that he should acquire a certain knowledge of what would have to be done in actual warfare. Now, as to Commissariats and Transports. It ought to be borne in mind that the Committee of which he was President, after the Egyptian War, had declared very strongly in favour of training a certain number of Infantry soldiers to Transport duties. The measure was not a very large one; it would not be a very expensive one. At present, when any campaigning was to be done, they were obliged to trust the mules and camels in a measure to untrained Infantry soldiers. In the present war Mounted Infantry had been sent out with comparatively little or no knowledge of the duties they had to perform. He had seen it stated, in connection with the Soudan Campaign, that the loss of camels and horses, and animals generally, had been something terrible. He believed that in General Stewart's Brigade alone the loss amounted to 1,600 out of 1,750. It was a well-known fact that soldiers not knowing how to treat animals, or how to saddle them, added enormously to the expense of war. He did not know what the expense of keeping up a Camel Corps was; but he was confident that the losses in the Soudan must have entailed great expense. Of course, they could not have camels in this country; their hard roads would not suit them; but he thought it would be a wise step always to keep a certain number of mules here for the Commissariat and Transport Services, and to keep their soldiers well trained in their treatment. It was well that their soldiers should be trained to the care of mules, because they were very peculiar animals, and they were excessively vicious and nasty unless they were properly attended to. Then, again, it was very necessary to encourage all soldiers, particularly in Infantry regiments, in military trades—such, for instance, as shoeing horses. The first want which displayed itself in a campaign was the want of farriers; there always had been such a want, and he presumed there always would be, on the principle that when men were most wanted they were never forthcoming. He thought that every endeavour should be made to make every regiment as complete as it could possibly be in itself. Much had been said about special corps. Now, he had the strongest objection to all special corps. Indeed, he should like to abolish every special corps in the Service, and make the regiment furnish everything that was necessary for the service of the regiment. Take the case of hospital orderlies. Of old, every regiment possessed its own hospital orderlies; and wherever the regiment went the hospital orderlies went. It was quite possible to keep men in a regiment trained to hospital duties, and the same thing might be done with regard to Transport and other duties needed on a campaign.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he wished, before this Vote was passed, to refer to a matter which came under his own observation during the Recess. He happened to be at Gibraltar, and he there saw a regiment of the Line, part of whom were clothed in brown uniforms, and the other in red. The regiment certainly did not present a very creditable appearance. The explanation given to him was—he did not know whether it was a correct one—that reinforcements had come out a short time ago, and when they left England there were no brown uniforms in store, and they were obliged to go out in their red uniforms and parade with the men at Gibraltar, who had only the brown uniform. He only hoped that what he witnessed at Gibraltar was not an instance of the state of preparation in which the Service was generally in. It appeared too probable that the stores generally had been allowed to run down to an undue extent. He did not think they ought to allow this opportunity to pass without expressing, on behalf of the Volunteer Service, his thanks to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) for having considered the recommendations made last year with respect to the necessity of dealing more liberally with the Volunteers regarding camping. It was generally admitted by military authorities that camping out was the best mode of training for the Volunteer Service; but, notwithstanding the allowance made this year, it was still the fact that the allowances were not sufficient to maintain Volunteer Corps in camp, and that the officers were obliged to put their hands in their

own pockets to meet the expenses. He did not think the Government were yet doing their duty in this respect to the Volunteer Service. He wished to make one observation with reference to the number of Volunteers. It was satisfactory to note that the number was increasing, and that there was also a steady advance in efficiency. He was sorry, however, to find that the advance in numbers did not extend to the Artillery Volunteers, for they had been reduced during the year from 38,8[illegible] to 38,236—a decrease of something like 500. This circumstance was very much to be regretted, because, in the opinion of competent men, the Artillery Volunteers were, perhaps, the most useful element in the Volunteer Service. They were trained in managing heavy guns, and would, therefore, if required, prove themselves most valuable. He suggested that it might be worth the while of the noble Marquess to inquire into the cause of the diminution. In his (Mr. Tomlinson's) opinion, the Artillery was a force which ought to be encouraged in every possible way. It was very well to congratulate themselves on the condition of the Volunteer Service; but they ought never to forget—and no one who had had anything to do with the Volunteer Service could forget—that after all that was said and done the Service was in a very incomplete condition, considered as an effective part of the defensive forces of this country. Until the Volunteers possessed every equipment, including transport, necessary to make them an effective body, it could not be said they were in a condition to perform the work which might be required of them. Whilst speaking of the Artillery Corps, he should like to mention a circumstance which struck him very much. He was not connected himself with the Artillery Service, but he was told of a certain corps in Lancashire that would, in case its services were required, be marched to Portsmouth or some part of the South Coast. He could not help thinking that that disclosed a defective system of organization. The primary object of a Volunteer Corps ought to be to defend the particular county or part of the country in which it was raised. If the Volunteers were called out their recognized post of duty should be the military district to which they belonged.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he hoped the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for War (the Marquess of Hartington) would be able to see his way to take seriously into consideration the case of that deserving class of officers, the Quartermasters. It might be said that when once a man became a Quartermaster he always remained a Quartermaster. If an ordinary soldier raised from the ranks remained in the Service he might rise to any rank—even to that of a General Officer or of Field Marshal; and, as a matter of fact, there were one or two amongst the higher officers in the Army who had risen from the ranks. The Quartermasters did not receive the money they used to receive as Paymasters. A Paymaster was a much less important officer in a regiment than a Quartermaster, and had not so much intrusted to his care, because the stores under the control of the Quartermaster were frequently of far greater value than the amount of money intrusted to the Paymaster, and yet, while the Paymaster was allowed 15s. a-day, the Quartermaster received only 9s. That they felt very strongly, and it seemed to him that in this matter the grievance they felt was very just. They had over and over again applied to the various Heads of the War Department for relief, but, like most individuals who had not the great advantage of aristocratic or other influence to bring to bear upon the authorities, their prayers had hitherto been very much neglected. In 1881 the Government offered the old officers an increase of 1d. per day, and he had no doubt that he should be only expressing the sense of the Committee and the opinion of everybody who had paid any attention at all to this subject, when he said that their offer of 1d. per day was little short of insult added to the injury under which that deserving body of men had long suffered. He thought the maximum pension ought to be raised to £150 a year. Another point which he thought ought to be considered was this. He understood that at present only a certain portion of the service of Quartermasters, whilst they were non-commissioned officers, was taken into account in fixing their pensions. He failed to see any ground in reason or justice for this regulation. Surely the time a man served in the Army as a private soldier was just as

deliberately adopted. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for South Hampshire, who is acknowledged to be a high authority on Cavalry organization generally, and especially on Cavalry horses, says he does not like to see the establishment of horses being considerably less than the establishment of men. The remaining complaint appears to be that a considerable number of the men in Cavalry regiments are very young soldiers, and not fit to embark on foreign service. I do not know in what way that can be avoided. It has always been contemplated that a Cavalry regiment embarking for foreign service should leave a certain number of its recruits behind it for the purpose of forming a depôt. The only question, which is to be the strength of the establishment of a Cavalry regiment? It may be, though it is a question upon which I do not speak with much confidence, speaking upon it, as I do, after only a moment's notice, it may be that it will be better, as the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for South Hampshire suggests, that we should have fewer Cavalry regiments with a larger complement than that which we have in their present organization. I have never, however, heard of any such reasons as that alleged for the arrangement. It has been suggested [illegible] convenient way [illegible] is desired [illegible] squadrons of Cavalry regiments. It appears to me [illegible] a very practicable arrangement [illegible] the roughly [illegible] squadrons to be sent out, and the younger [illegible] less efficient could be left at home. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) says that I ought to have taken the opportunity to have proposed a large permanent increase to the Army. The hon. and gallant Member has said that [illegible] battalions at home are, and always have been, deficient, and that the wants of the battalions abroad cannot be supplied. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has repeated that statement [illegible] might have [illegible]. I have never contended that the battalions at home are efficient for immediate service; but the hon. and gallant Gentleman did not bring forward any proof of the accuracy of his assertion that the battalions at home are unable to supply the battalions abroad. I have told the Committee [illegible] the Committee [illegible] organization has been [illegible] South Africa [illegible] have been [illegible] system [illegible] our military [illegible] My [illegible] that the regiments [illegible] service in Africa during the past winter [illegible] the Member for East Aberdeenshire (Sir Alexander Gordon) [illegible] complained [illegible] we have given [illegible] gallant [illegible] the Supply [illegible] Return [illegible] of January 1881 [illegible] was [illegible] stating away [illegible]

SIR ALEXANDER GORDON: I quoted from a Monthly Return dated 1st

former were granted deferred pay during the first period in 1876, and in 1881 it was conceded to them that they should have deferred pay for the second period of service also, which boon was not conceded to the men. Retiring non-commissioned officers, therefore, would get £63 instead of the smaller sum. The men who enlisted before 1881, and who went on for 18 years' service, having understood they came into the Army on a definite understanding, and enlisted expecting to receive the gratuity, were, of course, an exception to the general rule, and he should be happy to consider their case again.

Sir HENRY FLETCHER said, he was much obliged to the hon. and gallant Gentleman for the statement he had just made. He would point out that in the Estimates there were only £1,200 put down for this item as against £4,000 granted last year, so that all the soldiers could not be deprived of their rights.

Mr. TOMLINSON asked whether the noble Marquess had any explanation to offer with regard to the regiment he had referred to?

Lord BURGHLEY wished to know whether the noble Marquess could give him an answer to the question which he had addressed to him with reference to the Militia?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Perhaps it will be more convenient to discuss the details of the Militia on the Militia Vote. It is impossible in a general discussion to give details. With regard to the question put by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), the Committee will agree that I can hardly be expected to know the circumstances of the uniforming of a certain regiment at Malta; but I can promise that inquiries shall be made into the subject.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2. £4,543,000, Pay and Allowances.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I wish to say, Sir, with regard to this Vote——

The CHAIRMAN: I have taken the voices.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I will ask—I appeal to the Committee——

The CHAIRMAN: I state that I had taken the voices before the hon. Gentleman rose. I had not said who had it; but I called both for the Ayes and Noes—therefore the hon. Gentleman is too late. I say the Ayes have it

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I wish, Sir, to say that I rose——

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot allow the hon. Member to contest my ruling.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I beg, Sir, to move, "That you report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The Government, Sir, agree to that Motion.

Motion *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

EAST INDIA LOAN.

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—*Mr. J. K. Cross.*)

Mr. TOMLINSON said, he had no desire to detain the House; but he thought that this Resolution with regard to the East India Loan was of such importance that it ought to be accompanied by some explanation as to its object.

Mr. J. K. CROSS said, a Select Committee had reported last year in favour of a considerable extension of railways in India, and the money asked for was for the purpose of carrying out the recommendations of that Committee. He would not enter into any detailed explanation at the present stage, because it would probably be better to take any discussion which might arise upon the second reading of the Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee;

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the Secretary of State in Council of India to raise in the United Kingdom any sum or sums of money not exceeding £10,000,000, for the service of the Government of India, on the security of the Revenues of India

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [16th March] *reported.*

Mr. SEXTON said, it would be in the memory of hon. Members that a man

named Dennis Murphy was shot in his house at Castleisland, and that he died, from the effects of the injury received, in two days. Two constables reported that an outrage had been committed, and that shots had been fired from the outside of the house, and the District Inspector on going to the house found that a window had been broken. However, on closer examination, he found that the outrage could not have been committed from the outside of the house, because, judging from the position which the man occupied, the shots could not have been fired through the window in which the hole was made. In the course of two days it turned out that the two constables were in the house of Dennis Murphy, and that Murphy had been wounded by the discharge of one of their rifles, after which the two constables went out of the house and fired shots in order to create the impression that an outrage had been committed. They then induced the family of the wounded man, and the wounded man himself, to support their story, and it appeared that the circumstances were such that he would have corroborated any story which they chose to present. It was strange to him, under the circumstances, that the Inspector forwarded to the County Inspector a Report describing the case as an outrage, and that he caused to be arrested 12 men at night, one of them having been dragged out of the house in which his father was dying; after that application was made to the magistrate, and a remand obtained. He wished to impress on the House that the Government had not taken the course which the desire to do justice in this case would seem to demand. The Coroner's Jury appeared to think that the killing of Murphy was purely accidental, and the Resident Magistrate appeared to have been of the same opinion. But there remained another question gravely concerning the administration of justice; and that was, whether one of the constables invented, or whether both constables conspired to fabricate a false story for the purpose of producing an impression that an outrage had been committed, and thereby to impede the administration of justice? There could be no rational doubt that the constables did invent and propagate that story. On Friday last the Lord Chief Baron of Ireland opened the Assizes at Derry. Now, 20 days had elapsed since the occurrence of the accident, and 16 days had elapsed since the District Inspector announced in the public Press that it was not an outrage, but an accidental occurrence. He (Mr. Sexton) said that there had been ample time for the Crown and its agents to consider whether there was or was not sufficient evidence to put these constables on their trial for conspiracy to defeat the administration of justice. The constables had denied at first that they were in the house at all, although they were subsequently compelled to admit that they were there, and one of them had since admitted that he had induced the family to endorse the story, and that he had fired the shots outside the house. Well, the Lord Chief Baron was confronted with these facts, and in addressing the Grand Jury how did he deal with the case? He said, whatever might be the question as to the accidental or other character of the death of Murphy, there was no reason to doubt that a grievous misdemeanour had been committed. He said that it was a lamentable thing that members of the Constabulary Force should have deceived their superiors in a matter of this kind; that officers paid to support the due administration of justice should have endeavoured to defeat and misdirect the administration of it. He expressed his deep regret, and said that it was most unfortunate that the Crown had not sent up before the Grand Jury any Bill whatever which would have enabled them to investigate whether or not this gross offence had been committed. He (Mr. Sexton) said that within his memory no such language of censure had been applied to the Crown agents in Ireland by any Judge on the Bench; and he wished to ask what steps the Crown intended to take for the administration of justice in this case? For his part, he thought they ought to take very stern measures indeed. This was due from them, first, to those members of the Constabulary Force who desired to do their duty honestly; secondly, they owed it to the public at large, who in Ireland found it especially difficult to procure the administration of justice; and, in the third place, they owed it to the people of Castleisland, who had by accident been saved from becoming the victims of an atrocious conspiracy, and from having

been thrown into gaol and indicted for murder. And Irish Members knew from experience in the last four years that in that case informers would have been forthcoming — that there would have been a flood of evidence forthcoming against these innocent persons, and that the sequel would have been that the two peccant constables would be promoted for efficiency and ability; that iron huts would have been put up in the district, and that the people would have had to pay a special tax on account of the alleged outrage. He thought it would be seen that the Government had erred gravely in allowing so much time to elapse in coming to a conclusion with regard to the conduct of these men; and he trusted they would do their best to remove the heavy censure under which they lay at the hands of the Lord Chief Baron. He wished also to ask the right hon Gentleman if he sanctioned the extraordinary freak which had been perpetrated by the Local Government Board in Ireland on the Board of Guardians of the North Dublin Union. Not long ago the Guardians desired to change their treasurer. The Bank of Ireland having been their treasurer for many years, they applied to the Bank for a loan of £2,000 at 4½ per cent, and the Bank refused to give it. The Guardians then applied to the Hibernian Bank, who agreed to advance the money on the security of the rates, and to charge no interest for the first three months. Thereupon the Board of Guardians transferred their account to the Hibernian Bank. After that the Local Government Board wrote to the Guardians and said that it rested with them to decide on the removal of the treasurer of the Union, and that they refused to agree to the transfer from the Bank of Ireland to the Hibernian Bank. The result of that was that the North Dublin Guardians had been compelled to seek for a loan of £2,000 elsewhere on more disadvantageous terms than they could obtain from the Hibernian Bank, and to pay interest upon an advance which the Hibernian Bank was willing to give them for nothing. He said that it was the duty of the Local Government Board in Ireland to protect the interests of the ratepayers, and that they were not doing so in acting thus, and that their attempt to influence the Guardians in the choice of a treasurer was an intolerable pretension. In order to allow the right hon. Gentleman to say that he disagreed with the Local Government Board or with the Guardians of the North Dublin Union, he should move that either the Vote be reduced by £500, or that the House disagree with the Committee in this Resolution.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, the last matter to which the hon. Member referred was one with regard to which he had given him no Notice.

Mr. SEXTON: I only heard of it since the House assembled.

Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said, he was still more unfortunate in not having heard of it at all; and it was impossible for him to give any explanation or tell the House anything about the facts at that moment. He would only say that the matter should be looked into; but as to its being debated that night, it was perfectly impossible for him to make any statement upon the subject. The hon. Gentleman had brought forward a most deplorable event which had occurred in Castleisland. The hon. Gentleman had stated the circumstances as they occurred, and as he (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had explained them in his answer to an hon. Member opposite a few days ago. But the hon. Gentleman had conveyed an impression to the House that the Government had been extremely remiss in dealing with the case. What were the facts? When the circumstances were brought to the notice of the Government the constables were immediately dismissed from the service, which was in itself a very considerable punishment. Then it was said that the District Inspector was greatly to be blamed, because he had proceeded in the case when he had suspicions of its not being correct; but the charge having been reported and substantiated by the testimony of the two men, it was his bounden duty to proceed with it as if it were correct. It was true that he had suspicions with regard to it from the first; but whatever those suspicions might have been he had to wait until he obtained corroborative evidence. He (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) thought his conduct in this respect was greatly to be praised, because he got the two men to make a clean breast of the matter and contradict one another, finally worming

from each of them the truth. But as to screening anyone, or attempting to defeat the true interests of justice, every disposition had been shown from the bottom to the top of the hierarchy of the Constabulary to bring the matter into the light of day and expose what had happened. So much as to the conduct of the Constabulary. Then the question was raised as to what the Law Officers should have done in the way of prosecution. He had told the hon. Member that that had been considered. The decision of the Resident Magistrate was, he believed, that the death of Murphy was accidental; and that, of course, took away the idea of proceeding against the men for manslaughter. Then there remained the question of conspiracy. Well, that had been under the consideration of the Law Officers; but he believed it was not by any means so easy and plain a matter as hon. Members seemed to suppose. Since he answered the Question a few days ago he had heard nothing more as to the decision arrived at; but he could assure the House that there was every desire on the part of the Government to proceed in this matter in such a way as should mark their sense of the great mischief done to the public interest by the conduct of those men or one of them, if their conduct were proved to be what it was supposed to have been, and there would be no reasonable steps untaken which would lead to the punishment of such acts in future.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he thought the statement of the right hon. Gentleman was very well calculated to spread alarm and dismay in Ireland. Here were two constables actually engaged in conspiracy to murder. Those two men spread the story that Dennis Murphy had been shot through the window of his house, and that he had been murdered. On that statement 12 men were arrested and kept in prison for three days. The two constables adhered to their statement until they were forced into contradiction, not by remorse of conscience, but by cross-examination. They would have persisted in their story if they could; they would have gone to the table in Court and given their evidence against the men arrested, and those men would have been hanged upon that evidence. Therefore, he said that the two constables were guilty of conspiracy to murder. And what punishment had they received? Those two guardians of the peace appointed to protect the life of Murphy, the caretaker—those two guardians of the peace were only to be dismissed from the Service. [Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: No, Sir; I did not say so.] He said it was an abuse of phrases, and an insult to the intelligence of that House, for any sane man to say that serious action was taken against the two constables engaged in a conspiracy to murder when they were dismissed from the Service. He wondered that the right hon. Gentleman had learned so much during his short stay in Dublin as to be able to come before the House of Commons and say that the Government had taken serious action against two guardians of the peace because they had been dismissed the Service. The right hon. Gentleman had implied that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) rather underrated the difficulties of bringing these men to justice. Now, his hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton) was not a lawyer by profession, but the Chief Baron was a lawyer by profession; and he, like the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton), expressed his sense of bewilderment that so awful a crime as this should have been committed, and that the Government had not taken the trouble to appeal to the Grand Jury. How could the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, or any other man, defend such apathy, such screening, on the part of the Government? Why, not 20 hours, much less 20 days, ought to have elapsed before the men committing such an atrocious offence were brought to account. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) did not wish to exaggerate matters; but he was persuaded that when the right hon. Gentleman's statement was read tomorrow in Ireland it would be taken as amounting to this—that killing was no murder when it was done by a policeman. What would have happened if the story of those men had not been found out? Twelve men were arrested, and he supposed they would have been convicted. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), through his agent, would have taken good care to have had a jury of the proper colour; and he certainly would not have had any difficulty in getting a Judge of the proper colour. With a jury of 12 of the Loyal

Party, and with a ferocious partizan in the shape of a Judge——

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Gentleman has just used an expression which is quite out of Order. Mr. BIGGAR: Oh, oh! I said the hon. Gentleman has used an expression which he ought not to have used in speaking of a Judge as a ferocious partizan. I ask him to be good enough to withdraw that expression.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he would certainly withdraw the expression; but he supposed he would be in Order in saying that the same jury-packing would have taken place as had taken place in several other cases in Ireland, and the two policemen with their story well arranged, with informers procured by the lavish rewards that were offered by the Government in all these cases—the two constables, with all the means at the disposal of Government, would have been able to procure the conviction of the men. What would have happened? He supposed that two of the men would have been found guilty. They would have gone to the scaffold protesting their innocence; but, as the House knew, that would not have been any protection against the extreme penalty of the law. The neighbourhood would have been denounced in the House as a district in which innocent men were murdered at night by bands of marauders. The next step would have been that the relatives of the unfortunate men would have applied for a large money compensation, and of course that compensation would have been given. If the head of the family had been murdered, there was no reason why it should not have been given. The district, which was one of the poorest in Ireland, would have had perhaps £1,000 in the shape of a Blood Tax put upon it; and in the face of all these possibilities which had been avoided by something like a miracle the right hon Gentleman now said the Government had taken serious action, because the two constables had been dismissed the Force. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had said that an endeavour was now being made to get the constables reinstated. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) should not be surprised if they were taken back, because they had proved themselves efficient in the manufacture of crime, and, therefore, they were most fitting to perform such services as were required in Ireland. He did not think that the action of the Sub-Inspector had been sufficiently vindicated by the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) upon this point. He (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) could say strong things, but he would refrain from doing so, because he wished to stick at what was the central fact of the whole case—namely, that two men had invented a charge of murder against innocent men; that they persisted in the charge until they were compelled to acknowledge its falsity; that on this charge 12 innocent men were arrested and imprisoned for three days; and that in the face of so atrocious a crime the Government had up to the present—more than 30 days after the event—confined their action to dismissing the constables from the Force. He thought that a more shameful neglect of duty was never displayed by any Administration.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Galway Borough (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had spoken very strongly of the two constables. Now he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) was not there to say one word in justification of those constables. He could imagine nothing more improper than their action. The question was, what was to be done under the circumstances? He apprehended the first thing was to dismiss them from the Force; no one would find fault with the Government for doing that, inasmuch as it was a very natural course to take; and, as his right hon Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) had said, a course involving to the two men most serious consequences, such as loss of employment, and loss of the chance of pension. The Government were not to stop there of course, for it was necessary that the men should be punished in other ways. It was necessary, in the first place, to consider whether the men should not be prosecuted for manslaughter. The Coroner's Jury found a verdict of accidental death, and the magistrate, before whom the case came, did not feel himself justified in sending the men for trial. The next step to be taken was, not as the hon. Gentleman the Member for Galway Borough (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had suggested, to try the constables for conspiracy to

murder, but to consider whether they might not possibly be prosecuted for some conspiracy to defeat justice.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR said, he would not go so far as to say that their crime amounted to conspiracy to murder innocent people.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER) said, the hon. Gentleman agreed with him that it was impossible to prosecute the men for conspiracy to murder. As a matter of fact, the Attorney General for Ireland was at that moment considering whether the constables could not be prosecuted for conspiracy to defeat justice. It was too late to undertake such a prosecution at the last Assizes. ["Why?"] The prosecution for manslaughter only took place a short time ago, and it was by no means easy for any lawyer to arrive at a conclusion as to whether an indictment for conspiracy would lie. As a matter of fact, from information he had received within the last 24 hours, he knew his right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland was now considering the matter.

MR. O'BRIEN said, that the fact stood, after all the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) had said, that not only the first thing, but the last thing the Government had done up to that moment to punish the two constables had been to dismiss them from the Force. If the Solicitor General for Ireland had studied the charge of the Chief Baron to the Grand Jury, he would have found that the Chief Baron was of opinion that the dismissal of the men from the Force for the atrocious conspiracy against the lives of 12 innocent men was an insufficient display of energy on the part of Her Majesty's Government. Surely the opinion of the Chief Baron, as a lawyer, was of some weight. He (Mr. O'Brien) was not a bit surprised that the Government in Ireland, or its instruments, did not follow up the scandal in Kerry, and did not follow it up with indignant zeal. That fact was that the higher police officers of Ireland were in the power, and at the mercy, of many of the police subordinates; they did not know what depths of villainy would be disclosed if men were pushed too closely. The district of Castleisland was one that had been noted for moonlight outrages. It was not long ago that a very similar moonlight outrage was reported; but policemen were found to have been the delinquents, and they were let off with a fine of £2. How did hon. Members know that it was not in this way that the district had earned its reputation? How did the House know that it had not been imposed upon by many occurrences of the same kind? Surely if policemen were capable of fabricating one story they were capable of fabricating other stories. The fact was that many of these police officers lived in glass houses. Again and again proof had been brought before the House of complicity on the part of the police in Ireland with crime; but the proofs had never been inquired into. There was the case of the man Noonan, who was hired by County Inspector French to assassinate Judge Barry. There was the case of the policeman Woods, who, disguised as a blacksmith, went down to Tubbercurry to organize a conspiracy to murder. There was the case of McDermott, who was closeted with Mr. Jenkinson in Dublin Castle at the time he was at the head of the dynamite conspiracy in Cork, the unfortunate dupes of which conspiracy had since been sent to penal servitude. Those things he (Mr. O'Brien) and his hon. Friends had brought forward in the House again and again, and the answer had always been the same—vague general statements of the good intentions of the Government. The people of Ireland gave mighty little for the good intentions of the Government. All they knew and believed was that the Government were afraid to have any honest inquiry into the proceedings of their police in Ireland, for fear it would turn out that their own police were the worst criminals and the greatest outrage mongers in the world. Just let them see the sort of latitude that was given to those very policemen of Castleisland, the very men who invented the story of the moonlight outrage — the latitude that was given to them in dealing with the people in the neighbourhood. A week ago he asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) a question about the systematic persecution of a very respectable man in that district named Mr. Hussey, probably by those very policemen. On the morning to which his Question referred Hussey was waked up about 2 o'clock by a body of police-

men who had not even a warrant, and his house was ransacked for concealed Moonlighters. It was on the very night or morning of this bogus occurrence that these men went roaming about the country breaking into innocent men's houses. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was not able to deny that Hussey's house was systematically invaded by the police just at their whim and pleasure in the middle of the night. The fact was that the police wanted to create an impression in the public mind that Hussey, who had previously been kept for over a year in prison as a suspect, without trial or without any charge being made against him, was guilty of complicity in crime. The police, however, had never been able to lay their hands on a scrap of evidence that would warrant them in injuring, and insulting, and blasting in this way Hussey's character before the public. If the house of an Englishman were invaded in the middle of the night by police without a warrant the police would be shot, and he did not believe that any 12 men in England would be found to convict the man who fired the shot of murder. Unfortunately in Ireland the people were perfectly helpless to prevent raids by the police. So long as things of that kind continued under the wing of the Irish Administration, so long as the crime of those policemen remained practically unpunished, England need not be in the least surprised if the Irish people cheered on every occasion they assembled together for the Mahdi, and for the success of other enemies of England. While he was in possession of the House he wanted to say a word about another matter. The other night he had a Motion on the Paper in regard to it, but it was dropped because the hon Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) said it was not convenient for him to accede to it. He applied for a—

"Return of all Loans made to landowners or others in the county of Donegal, since the 1st day of January, 1880, according to the records now in possession of the Board of Works, specifying—1. The names of borrowers and townlands in which works were situated. 2. The nature of the works in respect of which Loans were granted, whether a Arterial Drainage, b Thorough Drainage, c Subsoiling, d Farm or other Buildings, e Dwelling Walls, f other Walls, g Fences, h Improvements or other Works, distinguishing new works from repairs of old. 3. The amount approved for each of the foregoing together with the amount expended in each case. 4. Act under which each Loan was made."

Now, he received a communication from the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert), stating two reasons for objecting to give this Return. They were reasons which he was perfectly certain could not for a moment impose upon the hon. Gentleman's (Mr Hibbert's) own good sense; they were reasons which, it was quite plain, were invented by the Board of Works in Dublin for the purpose of evading what they expected would be an inconvenient investigation. The first of the objections was that the Return would be of an inquisitorial character, and that to give it would be unfair to private individuals who were indebted to the Government. It would have been nothing at all of the sort. The Act under which all those loans was made was an Act which was passed by the late Government in 1879 It was an Act by which £1,000,000 of Irish money was set apart in loans to the Irish landlords, at a nominal rate of interest after two years, no interest at all being charged for the first two years. The loans were made for the express purpose of giving employment in the distressed districts. It was, therefore, public money given for an express public object, and he submitted that the persons who received the money were absolutely bound to account for it to Parliament. If the money had been honestly applied by them they had done a service to the community, and they ought to be very glad to have the matter cleared up. The other objection really seemed almost too absurd to be advanced by any public Department. It was that the Return would overtask the energies of the staff of the Board of Works Now, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert know thoroughly well that the Return could be made out by a single clerk in a week. It would be very useful if the Return could be made for every distressed district in Ireland; but there were special reasons for confining it to the one county of Donegal. Donegal was very greatly distressed, and there was the strongest possible reason to believe that large sums of the money which were granted to the landlords for the purpose of giving employment were never so employed, but employed upon bogus works, or devoted by

landlords to their own necessities. Of course, the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) stated that he would inquire into any special charge of this character. Now, a promise of this sort was perfectly worthless. The Return for which he asked was absolutely necessary, in order that people might be able to test their information and test their suspicion. At the present moment people had no accurate information, and no way of getting at accurate information, as to the amount of money that was lent, or as to the works towards which it was supposed to have been given, or as to what became of the money at all. If the money had honestly been put to the purpose that Parliament intended it for, there was nobody who would be injured by the Return that he asked for. This was truly a matter of very great importance and interest in Ireland. This huge sum of money had been lent as a public trust; and he now stated, upon the authority of some of the very best informed persons, that large sums advanced were never applied to the proper purposes at all, but were applied for the benefit of the landlords themselves. There was the best reason to believe, moreover, that not only had some of the landlords—of course, he was sure his remarks only applied to a small number, and therefore it was all the more easy to get at the facts—not only had some of the landlords misapplied the money, but the inspections by the Inspectors of the Board of Works had been of the most cursory and most unsatisfactory character. In point of fact, in some cases of which he had information, certificates of the Board of Works were actually given without the works being examined at all, given upon the words of the landlords to their friends and brother Freemasons, the Inspectors of the Board of Works. He could not imagine that the hon. Gentleman, with his high sense of justice, could accept the miserable excuse that had been given by the Board of Works for shirking this investigation. All he could say was that if the hon. Gentleman could not that night give them some more substantial, some less ridiculous and trivial reasons for refusing this Return, the only conclusion that it would be possible for the people of Ireland to arrive at would be that there was something behind which both the Board of Works and the landlords were anxious to keep in the dark.

MR. WARTON said, he thought that, in the case of the two policemen referred to by the hon. Members for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) and Galway Borough (Mr. T. P. O'Connor), the Government had done all they could reasonably be expected to do. Of course, it was quite right that the men should be punished; it was quite right that an attempt should be made to see whether they could not be prosecuted for manslaughter. That step, however, had been taken. He was inclined to think that, if the hon. Member for Galway Borough (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) had not explained his meaning in the course of the speech of the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker), a certain section of the inhabitants of Ireland would have gone under the impression that the hon. Gentleman charged the men with conspiracy to murder, and that the men could have been indicted on such a charge. Now, such a thing could not be done. He agreed with the hon. and learned Gentleman (the Solicitor General for Ireland) that it was an exceedingly difficult matter to draw an indictment in such a case as this. Indeed, if the hon. Member for Galway Borough (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) were to sit down and endeavour to draw up an indictment suitable for this case, he would find himself in a most difficult position. It was evident that, on general principles, the constables had been guilty of a Common Law misdemeanour.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he did not know whether he had any right to fancy himself a lawyer; but it did appear to him that, on the face of the case, it was clear that an indictment would lie for conspiracy. It was a crime recognized by the law to be guilty of a moonlight outrage. It was also a crime to accuse another man falsely of committing an outrage, and it was also a crime to conspire falsely to accuse another man of outrage. He thought that if his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Warton) were to refer to the well-known book of *Archbold*, he would find in it the form of indictment for this offence. Why the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker) hesitated so much, and allowed his conscience such delicate procrastination in the case of these policemen, he (Mr. A. O'Connor) found it difficult to

understand. He had not read the charge of the Chief Baron; but he could imagine any Judge—at any rate, any English Judge—would have little difficulty in expressing himself on the action of the Government in respect of those policemen. Now, as to the Board of Works, he, too, had ground for complaint. It seemed to him that the whole history of the Irish Board of Works was a history of mismanagement and obstruction. It was the worst, the most useless, and most extravagant Board in Ireland, and God knew that they had enough of very bad Boards in that country. The whole of Ireland was studded with monuments to the mismanagement of the Board of Works, and he supposed there was no Department of the Government which had squandered so much money as that Board. In the Board's Reports, given year after year, hon. Members would find whole pages devoted to a record of the drainage works which they had in hand. He did not know for how many years they had been engaged in draining; but, at any rate, there was not a county in Ireland—there was no division of any county in Ireland—in which the Board of Works had not been called upon to do something or other in connection with drainage. As a general rule, it had been very badly done. Whether the works of drainage were public or private, they all had to come under the cognizance of the Board of Works. Nothing was so important in Ireland as draining, and the other day, when he asked the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hibbert) if the Board of Works were in a position to furnish information, merely of an elementary kind, necessary for the formation of any judgment with regard to general drainage in Ireland, or with regard to any particular basin, the hon. Gentleman was obliged to admit that the Board of Works were not in a position to give information with regard to a single basin. Well, he thought that was absolutely scandalous. It was disgraceful that this Board, with all the materials in the Office of Registry, should hesitate about furnishing such a Return. He himself would undertake to furnish such a Return with less than two days' work, either from books and documents in the Library of the House of Commons, or in his own library, and he was certain that at that moment the Board of Works must have in its possession Mr. Griffiths' survey of the bogs taken in 1809, 1810, and 1811. That alone would be sufficient to furnish almost all the information required. That was only one Department of the work of this Board, and in every single one of those Departments they found the same incompetency, maladministration, and waste of money, and injury done to the country. He regretted that no Motion had been made to reduce the Vote, because he thought that such a proposal should have been submitted, if only to secure some declaration from the Government with regard to this particular Board. He was perfectly certain that if the Government would only inquire into the constitution of the Board of Works in Ireland—if they would only send a Treasury officer over to inquire into the work of the staff of the Office—they would find the staff capable of reduction by at least 30 per cent. He felt satisfied that the Treasury would be able to effect considerable saving of the public money, and that while they did that they could also so far improve the efficiency of the Board, that the Public Service would gain in more respects than one. As a matter of fact, the Department was a kind of outwork and buffer to the Treasury, and the Secretary to the Treasury was its mouthpiece in that House. The Board of Works in Ireland was incorrigible and inert, and asked only to be left alone, and all the Treasury asked was that that Board should help the Treasury to be left alone. Now, when they had a new broom in the Treasury in the person of the hon. Gentleman the present Secretary (Mr. Hibbert), who seemed willing to improve all matters in Ireland that came under his management in any way, he (Mr. A. O'Connor) trusted that this question would not be lost sight of. He hardly thought it would be, from what they had seen of the action of the hon. Gentleman since he had anything to do with Irish affairs. He (Mr. A. O'Connor) hoped that in 12 months they would see a great improvement in connection with the Irish Board of Works, and that when this Vote came on for discussion they would hear that the hon. Gentleman had seriously considered the question.

MR. HIBBERT thanked the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) for having given him private Notice of his intention to bring forward this question, because if that Notice had not been given, in all probability he (Mr. Hibbert) should not have been in his place, and would not have been able to have submitted a proper reply. He could assure the hon. Member that it was with very great regret that he was unable to assent to this Motion for the Return, and he took upon himself to say that though the hon. Member had used strong language towards the Board of Works, on account of the reasons they had given for not granting this Return, he thought the first reason referred to was one which anyone who looked at the wording of the Motion for the Return would agree was perfectly justified. The Motion was in these words—

"Return of all Loans made to landowners or others in the County of Donegal, since the 1st day of January 1880, according to the records now in the possession of the Board of Works, specifying:—1. The names of borrowers and townlands in which works were situated; 2. The nature of the works in respect of which Loans were granted, whether (a) Arterial Drainage; (b) Thorough Drainage; (c) Subsoiling; (d) Farm or other Buildings; (e) Demesne Walls; (f) other Walls; (g) Fences; (h) Improvements or other Works, distinguishing new works from repairs of old; 3. The amount approved for each of the foregoing, together with the amount expended in each case: 4. Act under which each Loan was made."

All that, of course, not only applied to loans to be made to landowners, but also to loans to be made to tenants; and he thought that if the Act of Parliament had intended that the circumstances connected with the granting of those loans were to be made public, and that if it were legitimate for such Returns as that to be made, it would require very inquisitorial proceedings.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The name was advertised in the newspapers in the case of each application.

MR. HIBBERT: If the names were advertised in the papers when the loans were made the information would be at hand, and there is no necessity for this Return. I think it would be an inquisitorial thing to publish the information asked for in this Motion.

MR. O'BRIEN asked whether he understood the hon. Member to say that if he (Mr. O'Brien) could find the Return of landowners, and those who obtained loans under the Act of 1879-80, the Return would be granted?

MR. HIBBERT said, he did not say that. What he said was, that the Return, as drawn, would include information with regard to loans made to landowners and tenants alike, and that if the Act of Parliament had intended such a Return to be made to Parliament, it would have contained a provision to that effect. If the hon. Member would give him any case in his county in which he suspected the occurrences to which he had alluded, or where he thought there was ground for suspicion that the money obtained for loans was not being properly spent, he (Mr. Hibbert) would undertake to inquire into those cases, and to supply all the information he could obtain privately. Having made that offer, he should have thought that the hon. Member would have been satisfied, and would not have thought it necessary to proceed further with his Motion with regard to the Return for which he seemed so anxious. He (Mr. Hibbert) could only say that since he had been at the Treasury he had been anxious on every occasion to give the Irish Members all the information in his power, and that he had given them such information whenever they had applied for it. That was the first occasion on which he had had to refuse an application of the kind; and he could assure the hon. Member that if he would give the names of any persons whose case he suspected, he would make inquiries and undertake to give him all the information he could.

MR. LEAMY said, that the hon. Member was offering to give his hon. Friend (Mr. O'Brien) information of just as inquisitorial a character as that for which the hon. Member asked in his Motion.

MR. HIBBERT: But the difference is this. In the one case the information will be made public, and in the other it would be given to the hon. Member privately.

MR. LEAMY said, that in any case the inquisitorial inquiry would have to be made. The reason why he thought that the information sought for in this Return should be granted was that the money granted under the Act of 1879-80 was really handed over to the applicants in the form of a public trust. Other Acts of Parliament had granted loans

for the carrying out of public improvements, but public improvements which, so far as the landlords were concerned, were their own special improvements—improvements on their own holdings, and in their own interest. In the case of the fund in question, however, the money was granted to the interest of all; not merely that the landlord should be able to carry out work upon his property, or that the farmer should be able to drain his land for his own benefit, but that by the spending of the money the landlord or the farmer would be able to give a large amount of employment to the peasantry and the poor people generally, when famine was in the country. Under the circumstances, this fund was looked upon in Ireland as a trust fund, and he thought that the Irish Members had a perfect right to demand information as to how that trust fund had been expended — how the trust had been fulfilled. The hon. Gentleman Mr. Hibbert said he would not like to give the names; but it had been pointed out that those names had had to appear in the newspapers when the applications were made The amounts when granted by the Board of Works also appeared in the newspapers; and surely to goodness there could be no serious objection to stating how much of that money had been expended on the works in respect of which it had been applied for, and the nature of those works. He did not wish to mention names, because he did not like to bring charges without being able to substantiate them, which he should not be able to do without the Return asked for; but he had heard of cases in which the money granted had been singularly misapplied. There was one case, however, in Donegal, where a landlord had borrowed money ostensibly to make a wall round his demesne. The landlord had received the money, and if he had applied it to the work for which he had obtained it a large amount of work would have been done and a large amount of employment given; but instead of that he only repaired a portion of an iron railing. The principal reason why the Irish Members made this demand was because this money was public money, lent for a specific public object and for the public benefit, and therefore the public had a right to know how it had been expended. If £5,000 or £10,000 had been granted for the erection of a pier, if the pier were for the benefit of the fishing community generally, the hon. Member would have no objection to state how the money had been spent. Why, then, should he object in this case, in which, as he said, the money had not been granted for the purpose of benefiting the landlords primarily, but for the purpose of benefiting the public? He (Mr. Leamy) was sorry that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury had found it necessary, so early in his official capacity at the Treasury, to refuse the reasonable request of the Irish Members; and he could not help thinking that the more the hon Member considered the matter the more he would come to the conclusion that the Irish Members had no inquisitorial motive in moving for this Return, but that they merely wanted to know how this money given for the Public Service had been actually spent. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, in answer to the hon Member for Sligo (Mr Sexton) with regard to the action of the Local Government Board, had made a statement in the House that night which he no doubt thought a sufficient reply to the hon. Member. He had said that he did not know anything about the matter. That was to say, that the right hon Gentleman who was President of the Local Government Board in Ireland knew nothing whatever of the action taken by the Body over which he presided He did not blame the right hon Gentleman for not knowing much about it, but Englishmen who grumbled at the temper of the Irish people ought not to be too much surprised at that temper when they saw, as in this case, a right hon. Gentleman at the head of a Department pleading absolute ignorance of the work of that Department, and being unable to give information except from people who were hostile to the majority of the Irish Representatives. He (Mr Leamy) only referred to the right hon. Gentleman's ignorance for the purpose of pointing out the difficulty in which the Irish Members were placed in dealing with matters of this kind The Solicitor General for Ireland had stated that the case of the two policemen was occupying the attention of the Government, but surely it was a very remarkable fact that the Chief Baron in Ireland should have de-

clared that these men should have been sent up for defeating the ends of justice. He (Mr. Leamy) would give no opinion as to whether these men could have been indicted for conspiracy to murder. It was said that there was some doubt as to whether one of the policemen conspired with the other; but if one conspired with the members of Murphy's family to defeat the inquiry, the Coroner was bound to make it "and for the purpose of defeating the ends of justice;" and if the policeman made his statement for the purpose of enabling the family to obtain blood money, in case his statement was supported there was no doubt plenty of ground for indicting the man. He (Mr. Leamy) hoped that now the hon. and learned Gentleman had taken the matter into his hands the delay which had occurred would be made up for.

Mr. MAYNE said, that they had a right to expect something more definite from the Chief Secretary than the reply which the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had obtained as to the action of the Local Government Board in regard to the North Dublin Union. This was a matter of considerable importance to the ratepayers of the City of Dublin. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant was President of the Irish Local Government Board, and this matter had now been pending nearly a fortnight, and yet the right hon. Gentleman appeared to know nothing of what had been going on. Was not the right hon. Gentleman aware that a letter from the Local Government Board of Ireland had been read at the meeting of the North Dublin Union Guardians yesterday, dated November last—a letter in which it was stated that their attention had been called to the Minute of the Board of Guardians, in which they changed their banking account by resolution, and in which they stated their refusal to permit the Board to carry out that change? The Local Government Board of Ireland took this course on a ground that he thought he was justified in describing as a quibble. They stated that the banker of the Board of Guardians was an official of the Board. Their allegation was that its banker was really the Board's Treasurer, but the banker was paid no salary. He was not appointed in the way officials were appointed, and yet the Local Government Board refused to permit the banking account to be changed, because they stated that under the 24th Order no official of the Board could be changed unless the Local Government Board themselves changed him; and in this case they refused to authorize the change. The reason why the Board of Guardians had endeavoured to effect this change should be borne in mind. It was a very substantial one. The Bank of Ireland had refused a loan for 10 years to the Board of Guardians that the Board deemed to be necessary. The Hibernian Bank had consented to grant it for 4½ per cent, on condition that the account of the Board of Guardians was transferred to them. They at the same time consented, if this arrangement were carried out, to charge nothing on the overdraft which was necessary for the Board of Guardians to make in Dublin and probably everywhere else, because, as most people knew, the rates for the year came in very slowly during the first three or four months of the year, with the result that the Dublin Board of Guardians, at all events, were considerably in debt during those three or four months, and had to overdraw their account. The Bank of Ireland, under those circumstances, took very good care of themselves, and charged 5*s*. per cent on any overdraft that occurred up to May, notwithstanding that during the remaining months of the year they had a large sum in their hands standing to the credit of the Board. The Hibernian Bank offered to put the large credit which the Guardians had during the latter part of the year against the overdraft in the early part of the year, allowing the overdraft to stand without interest. Those were the reasons why the Guardians of the North Dublin Union thought they could do better for the ratepayers by dealing with the Hibernian Bank. Why, therefore, should the Local Government Board step in between the Guardians and the Banking arrangement, and insist upon mulcting the ratepayers for the benefit of an institution which had hitherto had a monopoly? He (Mr. Mayne), as Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Dublin Corporation, knew that the Bank of Ireland, having this monopoly, were most illiberal under it. The Dublin Corporation were bound by law to deal with this bank, or they would not con-

tinue their present relations for a moment. The Dublin Corporation would take their account away from the Bank of Ireland on Monday if they could do so. The Bank of Ireland, knowing the position in which they were placed by the Local Government Board and other official bodies, took advantage of it for the benefit of their shareholders, and mulcted the ratepayers unmercifully. The Guardians of the North Dublin Union had made a manly attempt to deal with a bank which was just as safe a concern as the Bank of Ireland, and was anxious to deal with them liberally. He (Mr. Mayne) submitted that the President of the Irish Local Government Board owed it to the House and to the Irish Members to now state that the action taken by his Board had his disapproval. If the right hon. Gentleman expressed disapproval with the action of the Board of which he was President now, the Board might probably listen to the remonstrances of the Board of Guardians of the North Dublin Union. That Board of Guardians had passed a resolution remonstrating with the Local Government Board, and asking them to reconsider their extraordinary decision; and he asserted that it would help the Local Government Board very considerably if there was an expression of opinion on the part of the right hon. Gentleman, if he could address the House, and if he could not, then on the part of some other occupant of the Treasury Bench, in favour of the spirited and proper action of the Guardians of the North Dublin Union.

MR. SMALL said, that he had listened with great attention to the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, and he had understood from his observations in regard to the Castleisland case that the Government were of opinion that they could not prosecute the policemen for manslaughter, because the Coroner's Jury had not brought in such a verdict against them.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. WALKER): I did not say that. The magistrates had refused to send them for trial.

MR. SMALL said, there were one or two other matters which had occurred in the North of Ireland which had come under the notice of the hon. and learned Gentleman, and which could not now, therefore, be regarded by him with surprise. He (Mr. Small) wished to draw attention to a trial which had taken place at Armagh in the case of Francis Hughes. An application had been made to get the venue changed from Armagh, on the ground that Party feeling ran so high that a trial of this kind could not be properly held in that county. A man had been violently murdered within a few yards of the Orange Hall in the town where the outrage occurred, and the murder was consequently attributed to Orangemen. He (Mr. Small) had some knowledge of the district, and he was aware that the majority of those on the Jury Panel in that county were strong sympathizers with the Orange brotherhood, many of them being sworn and active members of the organization. Three men, believed to be Orangemen, were charged with the murder to which he referred—the murder of a Catholic, and it was hardly likely that if they were tried locally they would get a fair trial. Therefore, a request was made to the Government to have the venue changed to some other county. The application was a very sensible one, and should have been complied with; but the Government, he understood, held that it would be unfair to change the venue, and that there was no reason to believe that a proper trial could not be had in Armagh. Accordingly, the three men charged with the murder of this Catholic were brought to trial in the county of Armagh. The bill sent up before the Grand Jury was for manslaughter. The Grand Jury threw it out, and found a bill merely for assault occasioning grievous bodily harm, and this notwithstanding that the man whose death was the subject of the trial had been killed by having his skull smashed in with a stone of several pounds weight. Could there be any doubt that an assault of this kind was an assault "occasioning grievous bodily harm?" The case came before the Petty Jury. He (Mr. Small) had often been present at Assizes in the city of Armagh, and had noticed the way in which this business was done. The Crown Solicitor, himself a Catholic—one of the class of men who were most despised in Ireland, that was to say, a Castle Catholic, one of those who were usually found to do the dirty work from which respectable Protestants would recoil—was in the habit of holding the

Jury Panel in his hand, going over it, and carefully excluding from it all those whom he knew or believed to be Catholics. He (Mr. Small) asserted most positively that this Crown Solicitor, Kilkelly, had struck off Catholic names time out of mind, and that whenever a Catholic had got upon the panel it was only in consequence of his bearing a name which had a Protestant sound. In the case to which he was referring a jury was empanelled consisting of 11 Protestants and one Catholic, and that in a county where the majority of the people were Catholics. The one Catholic upon the jury got on simply because his name was Adams, which the hon. and learned Gentleman must be aware was a well-known Protestant name in Ireland. Mr. Kilkelly had felt himself reasonably certain that William Adams was a Protestant, otherwise he would not have put him on the panel. The three men were put upon their trial before this jury, with the curious result that the prisoners were acquitted even on the minor charge, and were found guilty of a common assault. He presumed that the hon. and learned Gentleman knew, as every criminal lawyer knew, what a common assault was. It was a term which was generally applied to an assault of the slightest character, unaccompanied by serious disturbance or serious result. The jury found that the men who had smashed in their victim's skull with a stone which weighed several pounds were only guilty of a common assault. The trial had taken place before Mr. Justice Johnson, of whom it might be said, whatever could be said of other Judges in Ireland, that he at least was an impartial and just magistrate. This Justice said that of all the evidence which had ever been brought before a Petty Jury none had been clearer than this, and that they would have been justified in bringing in a verdict of manslaughter. It was stated in that House, in reply to an hon. Friend of his (Mr. Small's), a day or two ago, that all the evidence had been produced before the Petty Jury. Was all the evidence produced? Mr. Justice Johnson had given the men 12 months' imprisonment, which he believed was the utmost he could possibly give them. In that way he showed his appreciation of the conduct of the Grand Jury, in the first place, for returning a true bill for a less offence than that for which the prisoners had been indicted; and, secondly, of the conduct of the Petty Jury in bringing in a verdict for a common assault. In sentencing the men the learned Judge said that they had followed their victim as Indians dogged their enemies. He (Mr. Small) could inform the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland that before very long he would hear a great deal more about this trial. In the beginning of June there was a Nationalist demonstration in Newry, on which occasion the Orangemen fired with murderous intention on the Nationalist gathering. Although they were sent for trial by the magistrates, it was found that an impartial trial could not be had in the county town, and application was made to change the venue. The Government, always ready to bring prisoners to Dublin to be tried by special juries, hesitated to bring those men to Dublin to be tried. It was said that the Dublin juries had too much to do, and in the last two years, no doubt, they had had a great deal of work, because they had to try criminals from all parts of Ireland; but it was strange that this only struck the Government when an application was made to change the venue in this case. The Irish Government, however, after hesitating and coquetting with the question, promised to change the venue locally, and they changed it to — Belfast. Yes; they agreed that the prisoners could not have an impartial trial in the county town, and they thought it would be better to bring them before a jury in the county of Antrim. Anyone acquainted with the North of Ireland would know that the Antrim juries were the worst and most bigoted and intolerant in any part of Ireland. The Crown entered on the case at the Belfast Assizes with all the machinery of a State trial. Mr. Justice Murphy formed a strong opinion on the case; but notwithstanding that the jury disagreed. The trials were then adjourned, and it was understood that the venue should be changed to another place; but, to the surprise of everyone, within the last few days the Government had again changed the venue, and again changed it to Belfast. What did the hon. and learned Gentleman think the effect of this would be on the minds of the people in the North of Ireland? Did they want to purge their minds

altogether of the idea that they would get any justice whatever from the Government? Irish Members knew that this farce would be gone through again and again; and the Orange jury would be empanelled, and this time he thought there was no chance of disagreement, because the jury would be too well versed in the case before the trial took place. Would the House believe that, in a later trial of an Orangeman charged with firing on a Nationalist procession, the Crown ordered Catholics to stand aside on the jury being empanelled? Only a few days ago, Mr. O'Hare, who was on the panel in Armagh, and a Catholic, was suspected of being a Nationalist, and because of that he was not thought fit by the Crown to be on a jury. Politically, however, he was not sorry for what had occurred in the county of Armagh, for when the next election took place at Newry he knew that the two circumstances he had drawn attention to would be well remembered, and if any gentleman under Whig colours presented himself there he would be likely to go away without the letters M.P. attached to his name.

Mr. BIGGAR said, it could hardly be a matter of surprise to the House that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland should have pleaded ignorance in the matter of the Hibernian Bank and the Guardians of the North Dublin Union, because he was in point of fact thoroughly ignorant of all Irish affairs, and, from what could be judged, likely to continue so. Perhaps, however, owing to the amount of enlightenment he had received from hon. Gentlemen on those Benches, there was hope that he would make some inquiry, and that justice would be done in the case. Then, with regard to the application made to the Board of Works, to which the hon. Member for Mallow (Mr. O'Brien) had alluded, he had listened with attention to the reply of the Secretary to the Treasury, and although he was not disposed to think harshly of that hon. Gentleman, who, he believed, was desirous of doing what was right, he was bound to say that he had in this case given a peculiarly weak and injudicious answer. It was notorious that the grossest frauds were practised by those who borrowed money from the Government. There was nothing exceptional in the fact that frauds were committed in connection with these Government loans, and the hon. Gentleman, instead of saying to the hon. Member for Mallow that he was very much obliged to him for drawing his attention to the circumstance, and that the subject should be investigated, replied—"If you will make a statement to me privately with regard to any particular case, I will give you every information." But then he took away from the hon. Member for Mallow the means of pursuing the case. He (Mr. Biggar) pointed out that if Returns of the loans were published, the local knowledge of persons who saw them would enable them to form an opinion as to whether or not there was any cause of complaint, and they could then draw attention to the subject through their Representatives, who would endeavour, if possible, to get some redress. A story had been told him by an hon. Member to the effect that, on one occasion, he had gone with the Board of Works Inspector, who had to grant a certificate for work alleged to be done. What occurred? His hon. Friend was alone with the Inspector, who simply went on the confines of the land supposed to have been drained, and asked the farmer—"How many purchases have you made for drainage, and what am I to certify for?" The Inspector never investigated any part of the work done, and in point of fact the certifying was a perfect farce, and he might just as well have certified on the statement of the farmer without going on the premises at all, and without pretending to investigate the matter in any way. He thought, although this was only one instance, that it was sufficient to show that the hon. Gentleman should reconsider this question, with a view to seeing whether, not only in the interest of Irish Members, but in the interest of the Board of Works, whose duty it was to get the work done honestly, and act with some show of judicious management, the system could not be altered. The Board of Works were in this matter the representatives of the Treasury, and he thought, seeing that there was such a tendency to borrow money from the Government on private representations alone, that all those transactions should be made as public as possible, and that information should be given to Members of the House for

the purpose of saving the Government from being plundered by advancing money on such pleas. Turning to another subject, he had over and over again drawn the attention of the House to the Vote of £1,200, which year by year came forward for the Ulster Canal Works. The Canal, he pointed out, had never been opened at all, and the money had gone into the pockets of some swindlers, notwithstanding which it was the custom of the Government to grant the money annually. He had always protested against the throwing away of public money for any unproductive work in Ireland and everywhere else, because it was a thing which ought neither to be defended nor practised; and he would always be ready to throw obstacles in the way of the borrowing and spending of public money on works of that kind. Then, with regard to the Castleisland case. It was well known that two persons alleged to be innocent had been hanged for a murder which was committed at that place; and now, when a similar case was proved—when it was shown that two constables had attempted to get innocent men hanged—the Government simply dismissed the men from the Force, and there would be no chance of punishing them further, because, if they had any sense at all, they would get out of the jurisdiction of the Courts of Law. He thought with his hon. Friend the Member for Galway Borough (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) that the Government ought to be ashamed of themselves for the course they had taken in this matter; because if the constables had not been found out in this conspiracy to murder, of which if not legally they were morally guilty, some of the 12 men who were arrested would undoubtedly have been hanged. The Government would have taken care that the men were tried at a place where they would be certain of getting a packed jury, they would have brought the case for trial before a partizan Judge like Mr. Justice Lawson or Mr. Justice O'Brien, and a conviction would have followed as a matter of course. Earl Spencer would then have said—"There has been a verdict by a jury given, and I will hang the men whether right or wrong." The hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Small) had drawn attention to the change of venue which had taken place in the case of Orangemen who fired upon a Nationalist gathering at Newry, with regard to which he (Mr. Biggar) said, from his own knowledge, that it would be perfectly impossible to get an honest verdict at Belfast. He knew that, because he had been engaged in several cases in which civil juries had perjured themselves in the most atrocious manner, and had returned verdicts against him simply because he happened to belong to a Party different from that to which they belonged. The Government seemed to have lost their minds altogether, or they ought to know that it was their duty to get just and not dishonest verdicts; they ought to know, even from a mere Party point of view, that it was the interest of their Party to be reasonably popular with the Party to which hon. Members on those Benches belonged. As the hon. Member for Wexford had said, there was no doubt that it was the bounden duty of Nationalists in the North of Ireland to throw the whole weight of their power and influence against the Party who acted as gross partizans by deliberately packing juries and taking care that a class of persons who were their enemies politically should get off scot-free, and that those who belonged to the Party whose support they hoped to have at the next Election should be convicted, whether guilty or not. Those were matters with regard to which he thought the Government ought to turn over a new leaf. There was a large part of the Irish population living in England, whose support it would be impossible for the Government to gain if they continued their present course of action with regard to Judges, officials, and juries in Ireland. In point of fact, the whole conduct of the Government in Ireland had been to screen and support persons of bad character, and with regard to persons of good character to do all they could to injure them.

Mr. P. J. POWER said, if some of his hon. Friends were a little more experienced in the way in which the Local Government Board discharged the duties of the Department, they would have expressed no surprise at anything they did. It was the practice to send down to the Poor Law Boards in Ireland a gentleman as Auditor from the Local Government Board, who, as a rule, differed with the Guardians on every point. Those gentlemen were most peremptory

in the matter of surcharges. In England, if the Auditor made a surcharge there was an appeal against it; but in Ireland there was no appeal, and the Guardians had to submit to any charge, although it might be of the most outrageous character. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) ruled with gentle sway in Ireland, when he arrested and threw into gaol hundreds of the Irish people, without trial, it was not unusual for the wives of persons so arrested to apply to the Boards of Guardians for outdoor relief, while their husbands were in gaol. A "suspect," in the neighbourhood of Waterford, having been arrested, his wife applied to the Guardians for outdoor relief, which was granted her to the extent of 10*s*. or 15*s*. a-week for herself and five children. Shortly afterwards the Auditor came down and surcharged the amount paid. The Guardians were told that they should have applied to the Local Government Board before they made the grant, although it should be remembered that the poor woman would have had nothing to subsist on in the meantime. Well, the surcharge was made, and those who signed the checks had no remedy, and they had to pay the amount of the surcharge. If the advice which the hon. Member for Mallow Mr. O'Brien had given had been acted upon, the Board might not have found it very easy to collect the money, and in future they would probably profit by that advice. Then there was another case, with respect to the working of the Labourers' Act, in which a great interest was taken in Ireland. The Board thought it might be well that they should procure guides, published in Dublin, which clearly stated the object of the Act and the way in which it should be put in force. They were obtained, and in that case also the Auditor of the Local Government Board came down and surcharged the amount. Again, for some years previously it had been the habit in the Union over which he had the honour now to preside to make a certain annual payment of £55. He himself made the same payment in one year which his predecessors had made; but owing to some cause which he knew not, the Auditor came down and surcharged him with the sum of £55. That was another peculiar instance of even-handed justice on the part of the Local Government Board. He was happy to say, however, that his predecessor, Sir Robert Paul, and some gentlemen of his Sir Robert Paul's way of thinking and some gentlemen of his own way of thinking, considered the surcharge so monstrous that they interested themselves in the matter, and the Local Government Board spoke to their Auditor, and he, under their influence, did not make a charge. He thought that these few instances would suffice to show hon. Members, no matter to what Party they might belong in that House, that they in Ireland had to put up with a dictatorial spirit on the part of the Local Government Board which English or Scotch Members would not tolerate for 24 hours. The Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had, last autumn, held out some hopes that he would be prepared to bring in a measure dealing with this subject; however, he had not moved in the matter up to that time. The Local Government Board seemed to have no other work in Ireland than to thwart and annoy the Guardians. Certainly there could be no greater instance of their incapacity than their treatment of an eminent medical man a few years ago. The political views of this gentleman were not in accordance with the opinions held by the Local Government Board, and they, therefore, thought him an inconvenient person to have in a responsible position. When he was thrown into prison his practice suffered considerably, of course; but, in addition to that, this Board of worthies, who sat in Dublin, afterwards deprived him of the position which he held, by sealed order; and he would have been without his position to that day had it not been that popular opinion, which in Ireland was very strong, compelled the Local Government Board to reinstate him. He wished to mention these facts, so that hon. Members on both sides of the House might know what some of the advantages of the present system were. He imagined that a similar state of things would not be allowed to continue in England for 24 hours.

Mr. KENNY regretted that the Members of the Government who were responsible for the administration of Ireland had already exhausted their right to reply to the observations which had been made by some of his hon. Friends. There were a few questions to which he

wished to draw attention, and perhaps when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) heard him he might be enabled to offer a few words of explanation. Some time since he (Mr. Kenny) called the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the manner in which the Irish Government had set their promise at naught with regard to the appointment to the Magistracy of gentlemen who belonged to the popular religion. Last year the Predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman, the present Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Trevelyan), and also the present Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. Walker), made repeated and distinct promises that if steps were taken to bring before the attention of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland the names of Catholic gentlemen suitable for the position of Justices of the Peace, those gentlemen would be appointed; that, in fact, the Lord Chancellor would exercise his inherent right to appoint them over the heads, if necessary, of the Lord Lieutenants of the counties. Previous to that time, and unfortunately since, the appointment rested with the Lord Lieutenants of counties. Furnishing the other day an example in which a palpable unfairness was perpetrated, he asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether the Government meant to redeem their pledge by appointing a fair and reasonable number of Catholics to the Bench. The right hon. Gentleman, in reply, said that if the names of Catholic gentlemen were sent directly to the Lord Chancellor, he would consider them, no matter what the Lord Lieutenants of counties might think of the subject. No sooner had the right hon. Gentleman made that statement than he (Mr. Kenny) had sent to him a letter from the Secretary to the Lord Chancellor, in which he stated that with regard to the recommendations for the Commissions of the Peace the Lord Chancellor could not accede to them, owing to the fact that the Lord Lieutenant of the county had not sent a recommendation on the subject. Now, as a matter of fact, the two gentlemen who were recommended by the local Board of Guardians, and also by the respectable people of the locality, happened to be Catholics in religion, and also happened to differ in political opinions from the Lord Lieutenant of the county, who was notoriously an extreme Orangeman and a very extreme Tory. Without entering into the question of the appointment to the Magistracy further, he (Mr. Kenny) would like to know from the right hon. Gentleman whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland was fulfilling the expressed promise of the Irish Government last year when he said deliberately in a letter to a responsible body in Ireland that he refused to appoint certain gentlemen to the Commission of the Peace because the Lord Lieutenant of the county would not recommend them? There was another question to which he (Mr. Kenny) desired to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman, and it was this. The Government had undertaken to relieve certain districts of Ireland from a portion of extra Constabulary stationed there under the Act of *Will.* IV. Now, by the system of removal which had been adopted a great injustice had been done to the men who had been removed. In certain of the districts some of the subordinate men were removed while the sergeants remained. Now, under such a system the constables and sub-constables of the district had their prospects in the Force indefinitely postponed. Fifty-two had been removed from the county of Clare. These were all constables and sub-constables, but the sergeants were allowed to remain. Now, the result was that if that force of sergeants was kept up the constables and sub-constables who remained would have no possible chance of reaching any higher position in the Service for the next five or 10 years. That might seem a simple matter to the right hon. Gentleman, but at the same time it was a system which was practised throughout the whole of Ireland, or certainly in those counties in Ireland where the extra police had been stationed. There was another question to which he (Mr. Kenny) wished to draw attention—namely, the manner in which the County Court of Clare had been turned into a mockery by the antics of a gentleman who was called the County Court Judge of that district. For a long time the action of this man had been a perfect public scandal. It was ridiculous in the extreme to suppose that a person of this man's peculiar character could be capable of exercising judicial discretion to the satisfaction of anybody but

himself. To give the man his due he was perfectly impartial in his vagaries, for he attacked all men no matter what position—high or low—with an equal want of discretion. He (Mr. Kenny) had drawn the attention of the right hon. Gentleman, and also of his Predecessor (Mr. Trevelyan), to certain of this man's performances. He drew the attention of the Chief Secretary the other day to the fact that this County Court Judge was anxious of knowing from a witness who had been a juror in a previous case what verdict he was in favour of giving. Now, the Judge, if he knew the law at all, must have known very well that the question he put to the witness was a gross violation of the law. That was only one of the many freaks this man was constantly guilty of. Now, one of his favourite pranks was when witnesses were called on the table, witnesses infinitely more respectable than himself, to tell them that he did not believe a word they were going to say. That was rather hard on men who, in the first place, had not opened their mouths in the case, and who, in the second place, as far as public character was concerned, stood in a much higher position in the county than the County Court Judge. Recently, he (Mr. Kenny) had his attention drawn to another case in which two gentlemen, both of extreme Conservative views, came into conflict in a civil matter. It was the case of Mr. Studdart, a well-known local gentleman, a Justice of the Peace, a member of the Limerick Board of Works, but who resided in the county of Clare, and who was an extreme Tory, and a Mr. Stacpoole, also an extreme Tory. They had come into conflict concerning the value of some land. Mr. Stacpoole was engaged in the case previous to the one in which he was in conflict with Mr. Studdart. Mr. Stacpoole failed to prove the case, and then when the case in which Mr. Studdart was engaged was called, this County Court Judge immediately asked if the defendant was his friend, Mr. Stacpoole. Mr. Studdart handed up the account as required of him, whereupon Mr. Stacpoole's solicitor said that he had only received a copy of the account that day. A discussion ensued with regard to a longer notice being given; but the plaintiff explained that it was a matter which could be mastered in a few minutes. Then it was that the peculiarities of the County Court Judge were demonstrated. He threw the account book which had been handed to him on the table, saying he would not hear the case, and directing the Clerk of the Peace to dismiss it. He also told Mr. Studdart to go to some other Court which would hear the case. Mr. Studdart appealed in due course to the Judge of Assize, and the Court gave him a decree with costs. In another case the County Court Judge gave a decree to the plaintiff, refusing to hear the defendant; but when the latter appealed to the Judge of Assize, the decision was reversed. Now, there was another peculiarity about this Mr. Kelly, the County Court Judge. He resided at the County Club, which was kept up by landlords and their agents, and the members of that Club whenever they were concerned in a suit, took good care to earwig his Honour, and prejudice him beforehand on their behalf. That was a thing which went on constantly. If proof were wanted of the manner in which matters were conducted at the County Club, it was only necessary to take the testimony of Mr. Justice O'Hagan. When he was originally appointed Chairman of the county of Clare, he put up at the County Club; but he found he was so annoyed by gentlemen coming to him and stating their cases, and, when he refused to listen to them, taking seats near him, and discussing amongst themselves the relative merits of the suits in which they were engaged, that he was forced to leave the Club, and he refused to re-enter it again until his term of office in Clare ceased. Mr. Kelly stuck to the Club all the closer, because the members made themselves pleasant, and made his duty extremely simple. He (Mr. Kenny) assumed that Mr. Kelly was prejudiced against Mr. Studdart simply because that gentleman happened to be a member of the Limerick Club, and not of the Ennis Club. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) would only consult the statistics in the possession of the House with regard to the successful appeals which had been made from the decision of this County Court Judge to the Judge of Assize, he would find sufficient proof of everything he (Mr. Kenny) had said. Some time ago a pamphlet was published in Ireland by a well-known mem-

ber of the Irish Bar, dealing with the County Court question, and condemning strongly the present system. It was conclusively proved in that pamphlet that not only in one, but in many counties, the County Court system was equivalent to a travesty of justice. This was a serious matter to the unfortunate persons who happened to be litigants in Ireland. Many litigants were compelled to graduate through the County Court, involving them in great expense, before they were entitled to appear before the Judge of Assize. When, in 1877, a new law came into force, and a number of very able men were removed from the position of County Court Judges, or Chairmen of Counties, as they were then called, and a number of men, who were unfortunately their inferiors in every respect, were put in their place, appeals had grown rapidly, and the expense incurred by litigants in Ireland had been vastly multiplied, owing to the present most unjust and worthless system. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary thought it worth while to pay any attention to what he (Mr. Kenny) was saying; but he assured the right hon. Gentleman that the subject was not altogether unimportant, and that he might find before long there would be such an outcry raised with regard to the system of administration of the law in Ireland that it would be made extremely uncomfortable for any English Minister who turned a deaf ear to the demand of the people. Now, attention had been called to the money expended in foolish and absurd projects by the Board of Works. It was a notorious fact that almost every work which the Board of Works had undertaken had failed. The Board commenced their career a failure, in 1846 or 1847, during the Famine period, for at that time their favourite amusement was the endeavour to make water run up hills. If necessary, he could give an instance in which the Board of Works absolutely intended to drain a district in such a way that the water, instead of flowing downwards, would have been forced upwards. The conduct of the Board of Works in Ireland in sanctioning loans in a great many instances where loans ought not to have been sanctioned deserved the serious attention of the House. It was well to contrast their conduct in this respect with their niggardliness in refusing loans to industrious farmers simply on account of some technical flaw in the form of agreement, or in the signatures sent up. As a matter of fact, the Board of Works placed every objection in the way of honest and industrious men who required money for the improvement of their farms. Yet they made no demur in granting a loan of many thousand pounds to an arrant swindler. He knew instances in which the Board of Works had so assured farmers of their safety in getting loans, that the farmers had undertaken works, and virtually carried them out, expecting to receive an advance in due course from the Board of Works; but that then the Board of Works had sprung some objection, and the result was that the farmers, having undertaken an expenditure they could not afford, were virtually brought to ruin. Contrast such conduct with the action of the Board in lending to Mr. Drinkwater, of County Clare, a sum of £80,000 for the purpose of working out a scheme which would never be worth £20,000, or even £10,000. The loan was made to this individual under the *régime* of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster). He (Mr. Kenny) believed that this Mr. Drinkwater, who happened to be an Englishman, went across to Dublin, after having got some kind of a Private Bill passed through this House, authorizing a certain loan, and made a speech in Dublin Castle to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, in which speech he described the inhabitants of Clare as a set of barbarians whom he wished to civilize. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford, with his cast-iron notions of philanthropy, got the Treasury to grant the man a loan of £78,000. Now, there was no inquiry whatever made into the character of the man. When Drinkwater had run through the money which he got from the Government in Ireland, he came over to England, and started as one of the "Long Firm," with the result that the gentleman soon found himself in gaol. This was the character of the man who went over to Ireland to civilize the people, and carry out philanthropic projects nominally for the civilization of the people, but really for the benefit of his own pocket. Drinkwater succeeded in extorting money from

the Treasury, whereas honest Irishmen, who were really anxious to expend money in reproductive works, were refused loans by the Board of Works. This was one of the things which had the effect of ruining Irish credit; and perhaps five or 10 years hence, when a genuine scheme of reproductive work was formulated, and a loan was asked for, it would be thrown in the teeth of the people that a certain Drinkwater, in the year 1880, got a loan of £80,000 from the Treasury, and that not a single fraction had ever been repaid. The Government must admit—though the late Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Courtney) would never admit it—that in their action towards Mr. Drinkwater they had been extremely mistaken and extremely foolish. At the same time, he (Mr. Kenny) pointed out to the Treasury that in this matter they were themselves entirely to blame, and that they ought not to be in any way prejudiced with regard to future schemes which were promoted by honest and proper men. The men who were really anxious to carry out proper schemes were men who did not object to have their antecedents and character fully investigated. It was only swindlers like this man, Drinkwater, who never intended to repay loans made them, that so objected. He trusted the Government would be able to give some satisfactory explanation as to the manner in which Drinkwater succeeded in obtaining £78,000, and how it was they had allowed themselves and the country to be swindled to so great an extent.

Resolutions *agreed to*.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

1. *Resolved*, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st day of March 1884 and 1885, the sum of £2,130,084 5*s.* 7*d.* be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

2. *Resolved*, That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1886, the sum of £10,804,760 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE (RAILWAY LOAN) BILL.

Resolutions [March 18] *reported*, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Sir Arthur Otway, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Hibbert.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 101.]

MOTIONS.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Lord Richard Grosvenor.*)

Mr. SEXTON: On this Motion I have only to complain that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman) has broken his word which he gave to me at Question time to-day. The right hon. Gentleman promised that at the end of the Sitting he would ask leave to introduce Bills relating to the Registration of Voters and the Irish Constabulary. He has not done so, and I beg to say that such conduct on the part of the right hon. Gentleman is unworthy and unjustifiable, and we shall not forget it.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

DRAINAGE AND IMPROVEMENT OF LANDS (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Hibbert, Bill to confirm certain Provisional Orders, under "The Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Act, 1863," and the Acts amending the same, relating to the Upper Morning Star Drainage District, county Limerick, and the Cashen River Drainage District, county Kerry, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Hibbert and Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.

Bill *presented* and read the first time. [Bill 100.]

MISCELLANEOUS AND OTHER SERVICES.

Select Committee *appointed*, "to inquire into the Expenditure for Miscellaneous Services, and the Expenses of the Postmaster General and the Revenue Boards."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

CHURCH BOARDS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Albert Grey, Bill for the establishment of Church Boards in the parishes of England and Wales, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Robert Reid, Mr Edward Howard, Mr. Frances Buxton, and Mr Holloworth.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 102.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Three o'clock.

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TO

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When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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